Learning to Harm: The Intergenerational Transmission of Gender-Based Violence

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Abstract

Using administrative data from Sweden, this paper provides the first large-scale estimates on the intergenerational transmission of gender-based violence (GBV) and evidence on how this cycle can be broken. We show that sons of fathers suspected of GBV are more than twice as likely to become suspected perpetrators of GBV, and daughters exposed to violent fathers are almost twice as likely to partner with violent men. They also experience worse partnership outcomes and substantially poorer physical and mental health in adulthood, with hospitalization rates that are over 20 percent higher across inpatient, mental health, and injury-related admissions. These patterns persist after controlling for rich demographic, socioeconomic, and neighborhood characteristics. We then examine whether removing fathers who commit GBV from the household weakens this transmission. To address identification concerns, we use a judge instrumental variables approach that exploits quasi-random variation in father removal. For external validity, we also estimate a family fixed effects model, comparing siblings who are less exposed to those who are more exposed to an abusive father. Across all designs, we find that removing violent fathers significantly reduces sons' later perpetration of GBV. The protective effects are particularly pronounced when removal occurs before age 11. We further show that father removal causes improvements in sons' behavioral trajectories, most notably reductions in other adolescent criminal activity. While these gains partly reflect reduced exposure to abusive fathers, we show that father removal also leads to declines in mothers' substance-related mental health problems, consistent with improved maternal capacity. Together, these results indicate that gender-based violence is a learned behavior developed during childhood and that reducing exposure to abusive fathers can meaningfully weaken its intergenerational persistence.

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1 Introduction

Violence against women is a widespread social problem with severe adverse consequences for the health and economic outcomes of victims and their children (Bhuller, Dahl, Løken and Mogstad, 2024; Adams, Huttunen, Nix and Zhang, 2024). Globally, 30% of women aged 15 and older have experienced physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner (Sardinha *et al.*, 2022). 29% of women report experiencing a sexual assault (Li *et al.*, 2023), with 6% of these incidents being perpetrated by a non-partner (Sardinha *et al.*, 2024). The estimated costs of these crimes are staggering: lifetime health and economic costs of IPV in the U.S. are estimated to reach $4.1 trillion (in 2021$), with $1.5 trillion attributed to productivity losses and reductions in lifetime earnings (Peterson *et al.*, 2018). In Sweden, the annual costs are estimated at $3.85 billion (Regeringskansliet, 2015). These likely underestimate the true lifetime costs, as they neglect to accurately capture labor market effects (Adams *et al.*, 2024).

Yet despite the widespread prevalence and significant costs of gender-based violence (GBV), its underlying causes are still poorly understood. Is the likelihood of perpetrating GBV an innate and immutable characteristic, or is it a learned behavior developed over childhood and adolescence? In this paper, we use rich administrative data from Sweden and a series of complementary research designs to provide two key insights. First, we provide evidence that children learn to either perpetrate or become victims of GBV through childhood exposure. Second, we provide evidence that this transmission channel can be broken, drastically reducing the extent of GBV perpetrated by young men, and causing young women to seek out partners less apt to commit violence against them.

To provide evidence on the transmission of GBV, we use rich nationwide administrative data from Sweden to estimate whether children exposed to fathers who perpetrate GBV are more likely to become perpetrators or victims themselves. Our analysis employs population-wide linked register data covering all individuals born between 1970 and 1995, as well as their biological or adoptive fathers. These data link demographic and socioeconomic records from Statistics Sweden with comprehensive criminal justice information from the Swedish Conviction Register and

Crime Suspicion Register. Together, these data sources allow us to construct precise measures of fathers' involvement in GBV—including suspicions of assault, unlawful threats, harassment, violations of restraining orders, and sexual violence—as well as children's subsequent perpetration or victimization in adulthood.

Using this linked and nationally-representative dataset, we provide the first large-scale descriptive estimates on the extent to which GBV is transmitted across generations. Raw correlations indicate that sons who are exposed to fathers suspected of gender-based violence are 350% more likely to become suspected perpetrators themselves. Controlling for an extensive set of demographic, socioeconomic, and neighborhood characteristics reduces this estimate to 260%, and restricting the comparison to a matched sample further attenuates it to 230%, which implies that exposure to an abusive father more than doubles a son's likelihood of perpetrating GBV. Next, we document that daughters whose fathers were suspected of violence against women are 240% more likely to form relationships with partners suspected of committing GBV. Conditioning on detailed demographic, socioeconomic, and neighborhood characteristics slightly reduces this likelihood to a 190% greater likelihood of victimization, and restricting the comparison to a matched sample lowers it further to 170%, suggesting that even among otherwise similar women, exposure to a violent father substantially increases the risk of cohabiting with a violent partner.

We further document that growing up with a father suspected of GBV shapes both partnership quality and long-term health. We find that sons exposed to paternal GBV are more likely to sort into disadvantaged relationships, partnering with individuals from similarly violent backgrounds and with lower education. We also find that they experience sizable increases in hospitalizations, with 20-50% increases in mental health and injury hospitalizations. Daughters display similar patterns of poorer socioeconomic matching and large increases in inpatient, mental-health, and injury-related admissions. These findings indicate that the consequences of exposure to GBV fathers extend well beyond the intergenerational transmission of GBV itself. Although the largest effects operate through later perpetration and victimization, childhood exposure to GBV fathers also has persistent and economically meaningful impacts on broader adult well-being, shaping both relationship trajectories and long-run physical and mental health.

These descriptive findings may not reflect sons learning to commit GBV from their fathers. Perpetration of GBV could be an innate and immutable characteristic that cannot be altered by policy interventions. Alternatively, perpetration of GBV could be linked to other observable and unobservable characteristics of the family, rather than to the father's presence. Even if sons do learn to perpetrate GBV from their fathers, it is not clear if removing violent fathers will cause greater harm. While removing abusive fathers may reduce children's exposure to harmful social learning mechanisms, wherein children witness and model their fathers' violent behavior toward women (Bandura, 1977; Ehrensaft and Langhinrichsen-Rohling, 2022), it will also lead to negative income shocks. Evidence suggests that economic hardship during childhood is associated with adverse developmental outcomes, including increased aggression and antisocial behavior (Evans, 2004). We find in an event study design that GBV fathers leaving the household (for any reason) leads to a 40% reduction in household income, which may cause the child to experience heightened economic stress, exacerbating behavioral problems and ultimately increasing the risk of perpetrating GBV in adulthood. Thus, while limiting exposure to abusive behavior may be protective, the economic strain resulting from such interventions could act as a competing mechanism that reinforces negative outcomes.

To test whether children learn to perpetrate GBV from their fathers, and whether father removal breaks this intergenerational cycle, we implement a judge-instrumental variables (IV) design that leverages quasi-random assignment of cases to judges who differ in their propensity to incarcerate and remove defendants from the household. This approach compares women who are observationally identical (and presumably identical on unobservables as well), except one experiences a removal of their abusive partner due to a harsher judge.

Using a residualized, leave-out measure of judge stringency constructed at the court-by-year-by-randomization-strata level, we find a strong first-stage relationship between judge severity and father incarceration. We find that quasi-random removal of abusive fathers significantly reduces sons' risk of perpetrating gender-based violence in adulthood, particularly when removal occurs during the child's formative years (between ages 1 and 11). The impacts are large. For sons, father incarceration reduces the likelihood of perpetrating gender-based violence by 53.9

percentage points, corresponding to a 94 percent decline relative to the complier control mean. For daughters, the probability of cohabiting with a partner suspected of gender-based violence declines by 64.8 percentage points, equivalent to an 82 percent reduction relative to baseline risk.

Surprisingly, the large impacts of father removal occur even though the median prison sentences are short, only 3 months. However, we show that these short prison sentences translate into persistent increases in the likelihood that couples remain separated in the long run, well beyond the incarceration period. In particular, the probability of cohabitation declines by 72.7 percentage points within five years after the conviction, corresponding to a 63 percent reduction relative to the complier control mean. This suggests that providing women with "breathing room" from abusive partners can facilitate permanent separations.

We further find that these longer separations result in improved outcomes for mothers. We observe significant declines in mothers' alcohol disorders and addiction care utilization. These findings suggest that removing abusive partners can improve maternal well-being and household environments, even in the absence of detectable changes in labor market outcomes. This evidence points to two complementary mechanisms – reductions in children's direct exposure to GBV and improvements in the caregiving environment – both of which contribute to weakening the intergenerational transmission of gender-based violence.

In addition to reducing perpetration of GBV among sons, we find that quasi-experimental removal of GBV-suspected fathers substantially reduces sons' involvement in other types of crimes during adolescence, with large declines in both convictions and interactions with the criminal justice system, pointing to a disruption in the intergenerational transmission of violent and antisocial behavior. These patterns are consistent with a social learning channel, whereby early exposure to GBV fathers shapes behavioral norms and increases the likelihood of later violent behavior. Second, we find improvements in selected health outcomes, including reductions in psychiatric care among boys and declines in IPV-related injuries and inpatient care among girls, suggesting that removal reduces exposure to high-risk environments and stressors during critical developmental periods. These *positive* impacts on children from removing GBV fathers stand in sharp contrast to the *negative* impacts of fathers leaving the household in other contexts, such as

divorce (Johnston *et al.*, 2025) and incarceration of non-GBV fathers (Grönqvist *et al.*, 2025).

These findings demonstrate that the intergenerational transmission of gender-based violence is not merely correlational but is shaped by childhood exposure and that policy-induced reductions in exposure to abusive fathers can disrupt this cycle. However, these results may not generalize to a broader range of families. Specifically, we find that families where fathers commit crimes that lead to incarceration while their children are young are negatively selected, even relative to other GBV fathers.

To address concerns around the external validity of our judge IV estimates, we exploit within-family variation by including family fixed effects and comparing siblings who experienced the removal of an abusive father at different ages. This design also absorbs all time-invariant family characteristics, including parental preferences, parenting styles, and unobserved neighborhood selection. The results show clear evidence of age-specific effects for sons: removal of an abusive father before roughly age 11 leads to statistically significant reductions in sons' likelihood of perpetrating gender-based violence in adulthood, with the effects attenuating and becoming indistinguishable from zero at later ages. For daughters, point estimates are generally negative but less precisely estimated. Overall, the family fixed-effects evidence reinforces the interpretation that exposure to abusive fathers during early childhood plays a particularly important role in shaping sons' later violent behavior, and that reducing such exposure can meaningfully weaken intergenerational transmission within abusive families.

We contribute to three main strands of literature. First, we contribute to the economics literature on early-life environments and the role of violence and family disruption in shaping long-run outcomes. A large body of work demonstrates that early-life shocks, and in particular exposure to violence, maltreatment, and other adverse family conditions, have persistent effects on children's human capital, health, and later-life economic outcomes (Aizer, 2011; Currie, 2009; Currie and Almond, 2011; Currie and Tekin, 2012). We add to this literature by focusing on how children learn to commit or experience GBV from their fathers. We further connect to the literature on the consequences of removing children from harmful environments (Bald *et al.*, 2022; Chyn, 2018; Doyle, 2007, 2008). Relative to this work, our setting highlights a distinct and policy-relevant margin:

rather than removing children, we study the removal of abusive fathers, and we show that reducing exposure during early childhood can substantially weaken intergenerational transmission of violence even in the presence of economically meaningful household income losses.

Second, we contributed to the literature on GBV by providing the first large-scale evidence on intergenerational transmission of GBV and estimating whether the removal of abusive fathers disrupts or reinforces this cycle. Previous studies on this topic have been limited to survey-based measures (Ehrensaft *et al.*, 2003; Fergusson *et al.*, 2008; Brown *et al.*, 2015; Ehrensaft and Langhinrichsen-Rohling, 2022). A limited set of papers in the broader domestic violence literature has documented that children who were abused by their parents are much more likely to abuse and maltreat their own children as adults (Erten and Keskin, 2020; Armfield *et al.*, 2021). These studies are limited by small samples, potentially inconsistent definitions of childhood exposure, and reporting biases, particularly underreporting by perpetrators (Heckert and Gondolf, 2000). By leveraging longitudinal administrative records, our study overcomes these limitations. This approach allows us to construct objective measures of exposure to GBV, link them to long-term outcomes, and provide novel causal evidence on whether childhood exposure increases adult perpetration or victimization, and whether the exit of a violent father and/or criminal justice policy interventions can break this cycle.

Last, our study relates to the broader literature on the intergenerational transmission of criminal behavior. Using Swedish administrative data, Hjalmarsson and Lindquist (2012) show that children with criminal fathers are twice as likely to have a criminal conviction as those with non-criminal fathers. Using Swedish adoption data, Hjalmarsson and Lindquist (2013) find that both pre-birth factors and post-birth factors contribute to parent-son associations in crime.[1] Causal evidence on the impacts of incarceration of fathers on children is mixed and suggests that context is important: Norris *et al.* (2021) find that parental incarceration in Ohio reduces children's later incarceration and improves neighborhood quality and Arteaga (2023) also finds positive impacts in Colombia. In contrast, Bhuller *et al.* (2018) find no effects on children's crime or schooling in

[1] A meta-analysis of 23 samples shows that children of criminal parents face substantially higher risks of criminal behavior themselves (pooled odds ratio = 2.4), and underscores the need for policies that disrupt the intergenerational cycle of crime (Besemer *et al.*, 2017).

Norway, and Grönqvist *et al.* (2025) show that parental incarceration in Sweden increases teen crime and pregnancy and reduces early employment. We extend this work by focusing specifically on GBV, quantifying its intergenerational transmission and testing whether removing abusive fathers – including through quasi-random incarceration – reduces children's later risks of perpetrating or experiencing GBV.

2 Data

We use data from multiple administrative sources, including the individual-level register data maintained by Statistics Sweden and the National Council for Crime Prevention. The data from Statistics Sweden span the entire Swedish population born between 1972 and 2022, covering demographic characteristics such as birth year, country of origin, and gender. These records include annual information on place of residence, formal sector earnings and employment, educational attainment, and detailed household information, such as household composition and family linkages. The family linkages allow us to link parents with children.

We further link these data to information from the Swedish Conviction Register and Crime Suspicion Register, which are maintained by the National Council for Crime Prevention. The Conviction Register includes all criminal convictions in Sweden from 1973 onward for individuals aged 15 and older. It provides details on the type of crime, the date of the crime, and court-imposed sentences, with each conviction potentially encompassing multiple crimes. This allows us to construct a complete criminal history for individuals.

The Crime Suspicion Register contains information on individuals aged 15 or older identified as suspects following police or prosecutorial investigations from 1995 onward. Since only a very small proportion of cases involving violence against women result in criminal convictions, we primarily focus on data indicating criminal suspicions of violence against women. This approach allows us to capture a broader spectrum of cases that might not progress to convictions.

This register includes data on the type of crime, dates of crime and suspicion, and outcomes such as indictments or convictions. Additionally, since the introduction of "Gross Violation of a Woman's Integrity" (*Kvinnofridskränkning*) to the Swedish Penal Code in 1998 and the mandatory

recording of victim gender for certain crime types, the register provides data on the gender of victims. For specific crimes, it also includes information on the relationship between the victim and the perpetrator, as well as the location of the crime. This enables us to identify cases of violence against women.

Using these sources of information, we construct two large-scale administrative datasets linking children to their fathers. First, we link men born in Sweden between 1970 and 1995 to their registered fathers. After restricting the sample to cases where both father and son were ever registered residents in Sweden during the period 1995–2020, we obtain a sample of 1,446,816 unique father-son pairs. Fathers may appear more than once if they have multiple sons in the eligible birth cohort. In cases where information is available about both biological and adoptive fathers, we retain information for the adoptive father. Second, we link women between 1970 and 1995 to their registered fathers. We have a sample of 1,374,446 unique father-daughter pairs after dropping pairs where one individual was not a registered resident during 1995–2020. Fathers may appear multiple times in the sample if they have more than one daughter born 1970-1995.

Table 1 provides descriptive statistics for sons and daughters in our sample. We find that sons and daughters with fathers suspected of committing gender-based violence are negatively selected on demographic, socioeconomic, and neighborhood characteristics. Their parents are more likely to be foreign-born, less likely to attain education levels higher than high school, less likely to be employed prior to child birth, and earn less on average. They are also more likely to live in more violent neighborhoods compared to children with non-violent fathers.

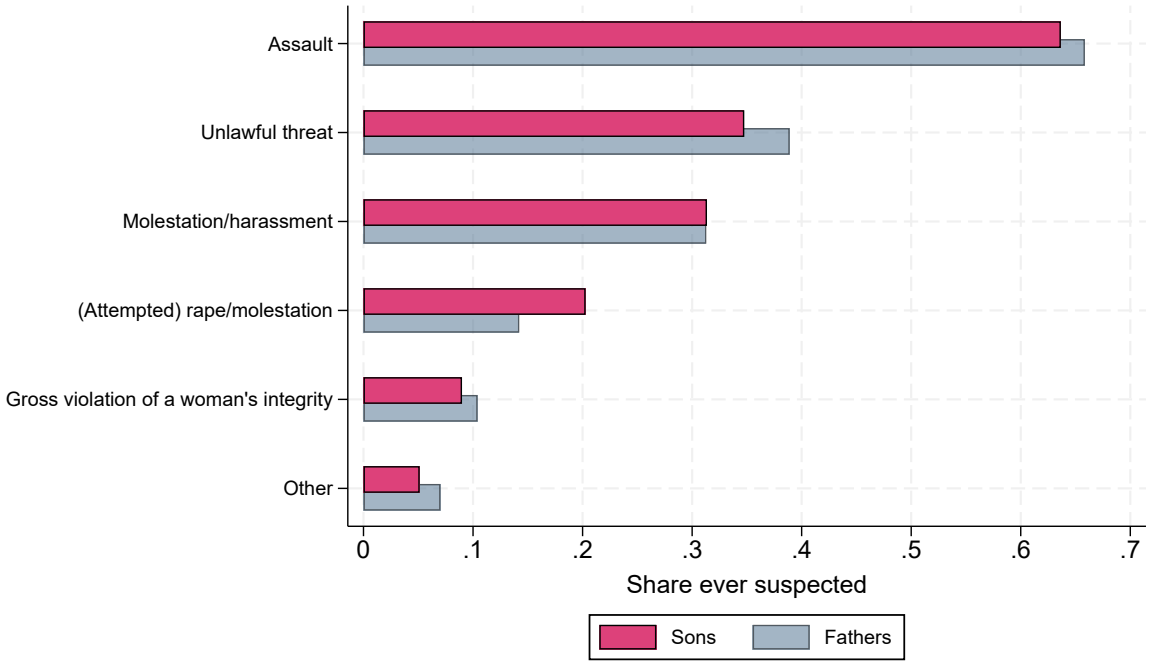
Table 1: Descriptive Statistics

	Sons		Daughters	
	Violent Father	Non-violent Father	Violent Father	Non-violent Father
Panel A: Demographics				
Mother age at birth	26.287	27.964	26.332	27.984
Mother aged -20 at birth	0.135	0.059	0.135	0.058
Mother aged 21–30 at birth	0.641	0.644	0.641	0.643
Mother aged 31–40 at birth	0.201	0.281	0.204	0.283
Mother aged 41+ at birth	0.009	0.012	0.010	0.012
Father age at birth	29.328	30.811	29.398	30.834
Father aged -20 at birth	0.044	0.014	0.042	0.014
Father aged 21–30 at birth	0.581	0.514	0.581	0.513
Father aged 31–40 at birth	0.323	0.408	0.324	0.409
Father aged 41+ at birth	0.053	0.064	0.053	0.064
Mother foreign born	0.307	0.157	0.311	0.154
Father foreign born	0.353	0.161	0.353	0.158
Child foreign born	0.136	0.075	0.138	0.075
Birth order father side	1.918	1.882	1.924	1.884
First child mother side	0.445	0.419	0.445	0.419
Second child mother side	0.315	0.366	0.315	0.365
Third child mother side	0.142	0.151	0.141	0.152
Fourth child+ mother side	0.085	0.061	0.087	0.061
Birth order mother side	1.964	1.906	1.973	1.908
First child father side	0.448	0.423	0.445	0.422
Second child father side	0.308	0.356	0.309	0.355
Third child father side	0.145	0.152	0.145	0.152
Fourth child+ father side	0.099	0.070	0.101	0.070
Live with father at birth	0.819	0.936	0.823	0.935
Panel B: Baseline socioeconomic status				
More than HS education mother	0.242	0.356	0.243	0.355
HS education mother	0.539	0.484	0.541	0.485
Less than HS education mother	0.210	0.153	0.207	0.153
More than HS education father	0.181	0.294	0.181	0.294
HS education father	0.521	0.462	0.520	0.461
Less than HS education father	0.290	0.237	0.291	0.238
Employment mother (year of birth)	0.790	0.809	0.791	0.808
Employment mother (year before birth)	0.781	0.827	0.782	0.827
Employment father (year of birth)	0.881	0.960	0.882	0.960
Employment father (year before birth)	0.869	0.952	0.873	0.952
Earnings mother (year of birth)	125682.287	133989.495	125705.598	134095.636
Earnings mother (year before birth)	126225.946	142629.488	126393.276	142645.483
Earnings father (year of birth)	190759.111	246721.517	191251.317	246804.468
Earnings father (year before birth)	183394.881	237158.164	184245.064	237207.693
Panel C: Baseline neighborhood characteristics				
Population	10776.691	9355.516	10749.696	9353.120
Share of immigrants	0.136	0.104	0.135	0.104
Employment rate	0.878	0.864	0.878	0.864
Mean earnings	195214.659	189776.419	195307.569	189737.462
More than high school	0.248	0.230	0.248	0.229
Less than high school	0.294	0.315	0.294	0.315
Offenses per 100,000	5374.958	4686.000	5356.621	4687.273
Offenders per 100,000	953.024	857.588	950.777	857.757
Assault rate per 100,000	83.994	67.783	83.357	67.794
Homicide rate per 100,000	1.077	0.800	1.042	0.800
Obs.	96,799	1,350,017	93,433	1,281,013

Notes: This table reports the mean values of variables for sons and daughters born between 1970 and 1995. Columns (1)–(2) report statistics for sons with violent vs. non-violent fathers, while columns (3)–(4) report statistics for daughters with violent vs. non-violent fathers. The violence is defined as being suspected of committing gender-based violence.

The primary variable of interest is an indicator for whether an individual (father or son) was ever suspected of any offense involving violence against women. This includes gross violation of a woman's integrity; physical assault; attempted or completed murder of a woman; unlawful threats; harassment; violations of restraining orders; and sexual violence, including rape and molestation. The categorization captures both intimate partner violence and violence against female acquaintances or strangers. Appendix Table A1 presents descriptive statistics on the prevalence and composition of gender-based violence suspicions among fathers and sons in our sample. It reports the share of individuals ever suspected of specific offenses, separately for sons and fathers, and then conditions these distributions on having any criminal suspicion. Figure 1 plots these conditional distributions in a bar chart. These exhibits highlight two key patterns. First, across both generations, the most common categories of suspected offenses are assault of a woman, unlawful threats, and harassment, which together account for the majority of GBV suspicions. Second, fathers have slightly higher prevalence rates than sons for most of the categories, which is consistent with their longer time at risk of perpetration since they are older.

Figure 1: GBV Among Fathers and Sons Conditional on Suspicion



Notes: This figure shows the share of fathers and sons suspected of each category of gender-based violence, conditional on having been suspected of any crime. Sons are born between 1970 and 1995 in Sweden and matched with their fathers using registry information. All data come from the Crime Suspicion Register of Sweden.

3 The Intergenerational Transmission of Gender-Based Violence

Children who witness violent behaviors towards women in and outside of their households may learn that violence is an acceptable response to interpersonal conflict and that violence and dominance towards women are normal. In this section, we leverage our data to provide the first large-scale descriptive estimates of the degree to which this intergenerational transmission of gender-based violence occurs. We do so in two parts. First, we document the degree to which sons who are exposed to fathers committing gender-based violence are more likely to commit gender-based violence themselves. In addition, we also estimate the degree to which daughters who are exposed to fathers who commit gender-based violence are more likely to cohabit with partners who commit gender-based violence.

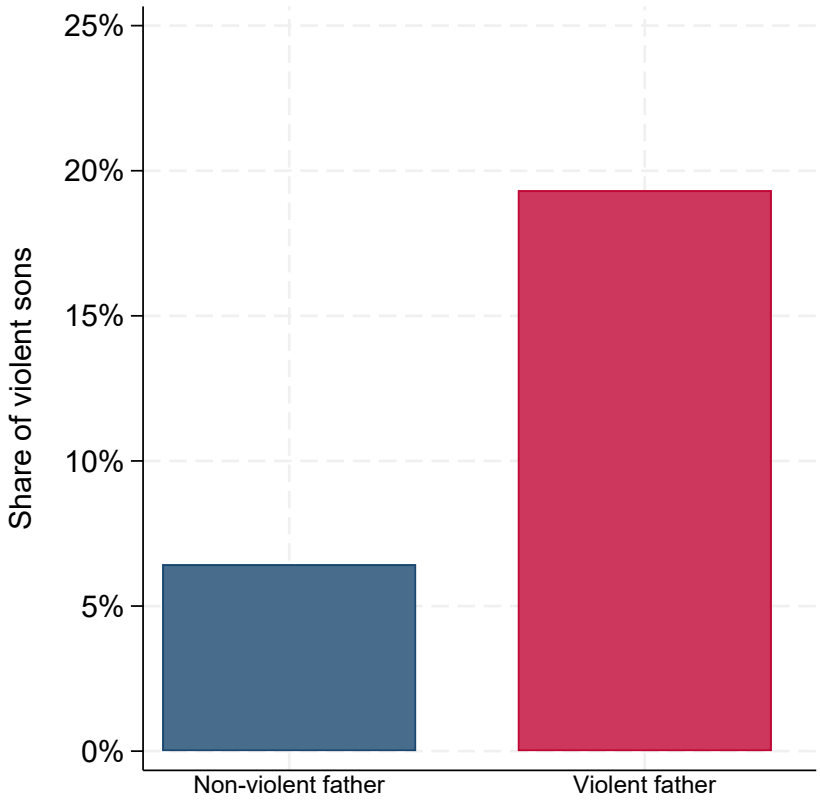
3.1 Intergenerational Transmission of Perpetration

Figure 2 reports the raw correlation between having a father with a history of gender-based violence and whether the son commits gender-based violence when he becomes an adult. The incidence of violence against women among sons varies markedly by paternal history. In Sweden, 6.4% of sons whose fathers were not suspected of gender-based violence grow up to commit violence against a woman. In contrast, 19.3% of sons whose fathers have a history of violence against women also commit violence against women as adults.

However, these raw correlations may simply capture selection on observables: as shown in Table 1, sons of GBV fathers are born into very different families compared with the general population. These families are poorer, less educated, and, on average, much less likely to be born in Sweden than other families in Sweden. To account for this, Figure 3 reports a series of linear probability models (LPM) capturing whether sons with a violent father have a higher likelihood of committing violence against women. In this figure, we progressively control for other potential drivers of the raw correlation shown in Figure 2.

Starting with the raw linear probability, consistent with Figure 2, the blue bar in Figure 3 shows that sons whose fathers were suspected of violent offenses towards women are 12.9 per-

Figure 2: Raw Correlation for Sons' GBV Perpetration



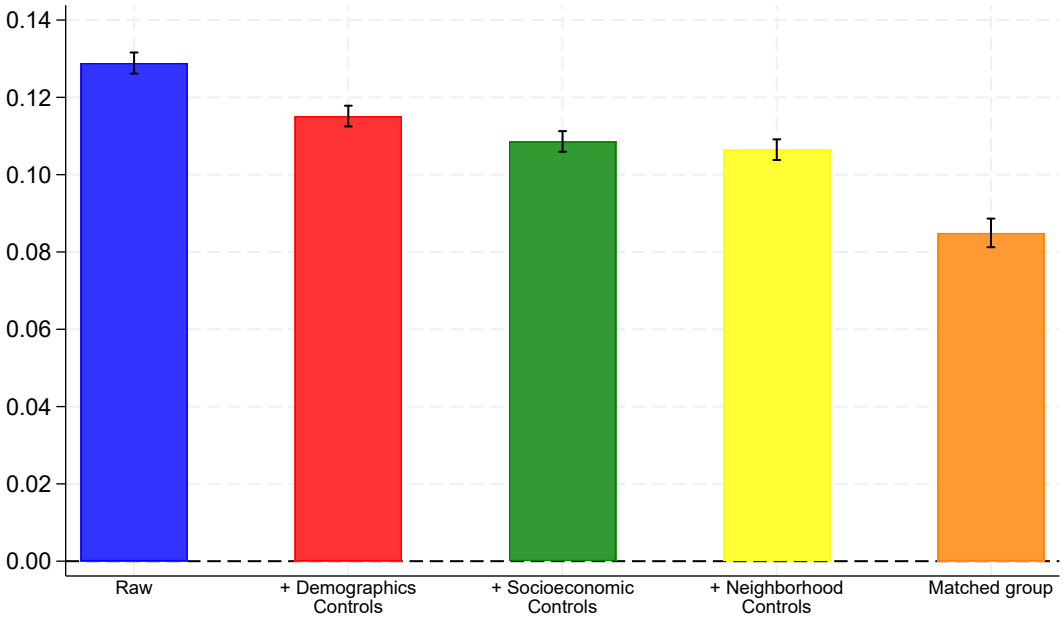
Notes: This figure shows the intergenerational transmission of violence perpetration against women in Sweden. The blue bar plots the share of sons suspected of committing violence against women among sons whose fathers were not suspected of such offenses. The red bar plots the corresponding share among sons whose fathers were suspected perpetrators.

centage points (p.p.) more likely to be suspected of violence against women themselves in Sweden.[2] As the row below the coefficient estimates shows, this implies that having a GBV father increases the likelihood of GBV perpetration of the son by 177 percent relative to sons without a violent father. Consistent with this raw correlation, the odds ratio estimates in Appendix Figure A1 shows that sons with GBV-suspected fathers are 3.5 times more likely to be suspected of such violence themselves as adults.

The red bar in Figure 3 adds family demographic controls, including father's and son's birth year fixed effects, indicators for whether the mother, father, or son is foreign born, and birth order indicators for both parents. The association decreases slightly but remains large: having a GBV suspected father increases the likelihood of being suspected of GBV in adulthood by 11.5

[2] Appendix Table A3 reports the OLS estimates that correspond to the estimates plotted in Figure 3.

Figure 3: Intergenerational Transmission of GBV Perpetration

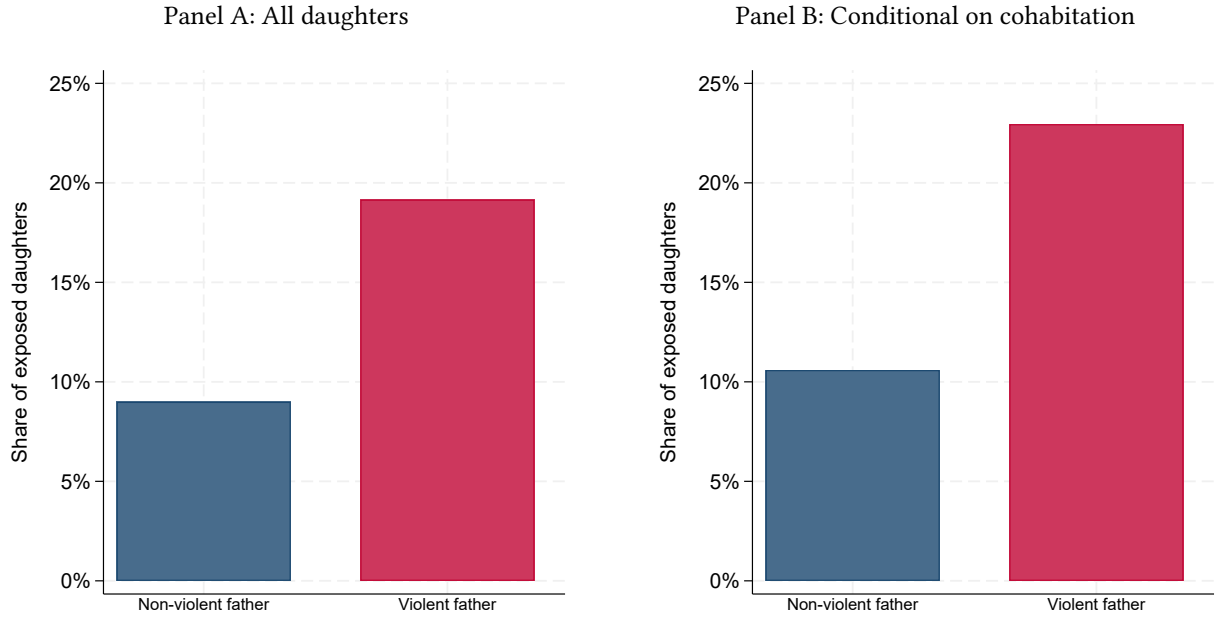


Notes: This figure illustrates the intergenerational transmission of gender-based violence in Sweden. The blue bar reports the coefficient from a linear probability model regressing an indicator for the son being suspected of GBV on an indicator for the father being suspected of GBV, without controls. The red bar adds demographic controls, including birth-year fixed effects for father and son, indicators for whether the mother, father, or son is foreign born, and birth-order indicators from both parents. The green bar adds socioeconomic controls: parental educational attainment (high school and university) at birth, employment status at birth, and adjusted parental earnings at birth. The yellow bar adds neighborhood controls, including parish population, immigrant share, employment rate, average earnings, share of university-educated residents, number of offenders per 100K, and assault and homicide rates. The orange bar uses a matched control group based on parental immigrant status, employment at birth, earnings quintiles, birth order, parental age (in 5-year bins), and parental education (less than high school, high school, more than high school), and reports the corresponding coefficient estimate. Standard errors are clustered at the father level. All bars display 95% confidence intervals.

percentage points. The green bar adds socioeconomic controls, including parental educational attainment, employment at birth, and adjusted parental earnings at birth, which reduces the association slightly to 10.9 percentage points. Adding neighborhood controls, including parish population size, immigrant share, employment rate, average earnings, share of university-educated residents, and rates of offenders, assaults, and homicides per 100 thousand residents, does not meaningfully change the estimate, which remains at 10.6 percentage points. The orange bar uses a matched control group based on parental immigrant status, employment at birth, earnings quintiles at birth, birth order, parental age in five-year bins, and parental education. Even in this matched sample, which, in addition to selecting similar boys on observables, may also do a bet-

ter job selecting boys who are unobservably similar, the intergenerational transmission remains substantial: sons with GBV-suspected fathers are 8.5 percentage points more likely to be suspected of GBV in adulthood. This implies that having a GBV father increases a son's likelihood of perpetrating GBV by 116% relative to a matched group of sons with similar socioeconomic characteristics but without a GBV father. In this matched sample, the odds ratio estimates in Appendix Figure A1 show that sons with GBV suspected fathers are 2.2 times more likely to be suspected of such violence in adulthood compared to otherwise similar sons who did not have a GBV father.[3]

Figure 4: Raw Correlation for GBV Victimization



Notes: This figure shows the intergenerational transmission of GBV victimization in Sweden. Panel A includes all daughters in our sample, and Panel B includes daughters who have ever cohabited with a partner. In both panels, the blue bars report the share of daughters who cohabit with a partner suspected of committing violence against women among those whose fathers were not suspected of such offenses. The red bars report the corresponding share for daughters whose fathers were suspected perpetrators.

3.2 Intergenerational Transmission of Victimization

Figure 4 reports the share of daughters whose fathers were suspected of GBV who later form relationships with partners who commit GBV. We use being in a cohabiting or marital relationship with a man who has ever been suspected of GBV as a proxy for potential victimization, and

[3] Appendix Table A6 provides the corresponding odds ratio estimates.

this outcome is measured over the years 1990 to 2020. In estimates reported below, we will also report the rate at which daughters appear in hospitalization records for intimate partner violence, providing a more direct measure of victimiazation, but this data is only available for later years.

Panel A shows that among all women with no paternal history of GBV, 9% are in relationships with a man who committed GBV. This figure rises substantially to 19.2% for women whose fathers were suspected of violence against women, constituting more than double the victimization risk. Panel B of Figure 4 shows that among women who have ever had a partner, 10.6% of women whose fathers were not suspected of gender-based violence have been in relationships with violent partners, compared to 22.9% of those whose fathers were suspected perpetrators.

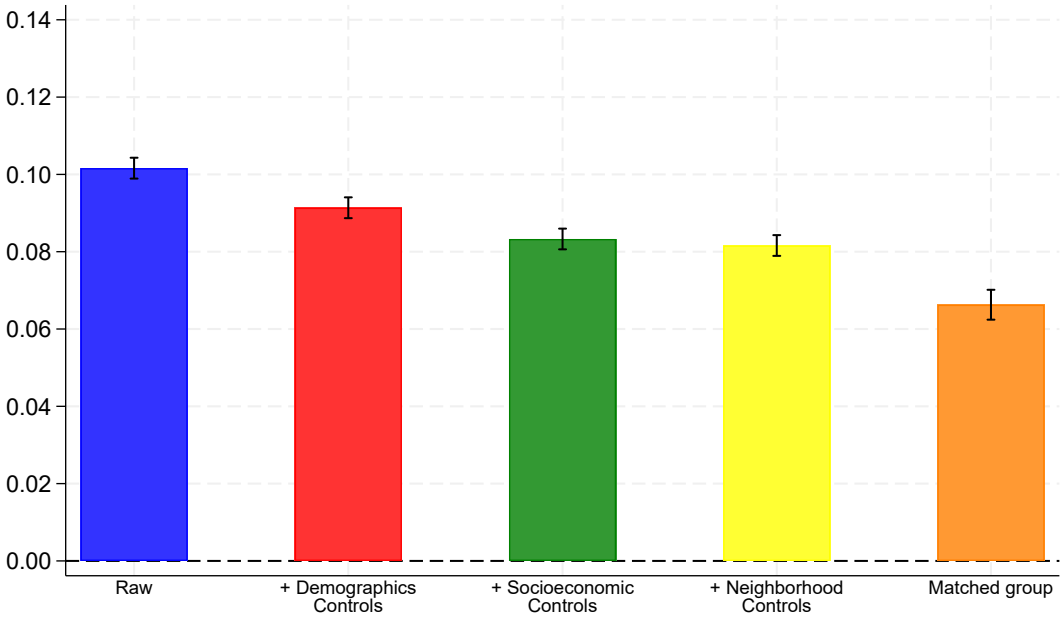
In Appendix Table A2, we test whether having a father suspected of GBV is significantly associated with the daughters' probability of ever cohabiting with a GBV partner. Roughly 85% of women in our sample have ever cohabited with a partner. Having a GBV-suspected father reduces this likelihood by 1.4 p.p. in OLS estimates with no controls added; however, the inclusion of controls in a sequential manner as well as the estimation based on a matched sample increases the probability of cohabitation by 1.5–1.8 p.p., which corresponds to 2% relative to the sample mean. Despite being small, the increase in the likelihood of cohabitation may increase potential exposure to violent partners, thereby biasing the OLS estimates of intergenerational transmission upward in the conditional sample. For this reason, we focus our remaining analysis on the unconditional sample, presenting conditional estimates as supplementary descriptive evidence in the appendix.

In Figure 5, we account for a richer set of covariates to examine whether the observed associations could be explained by other family, socioeconomic, or neighborhood characteristics (see Appendix Figure A4 for estimates conditional on cohabitation). Beginning with the raw linear probability, consistent with Figure 4, the blue bar in Figure 5 shows that daughters whose fathers were suspected of violent offenses towards women are 10.2 p.p. more likely to cohabit with partners who were suspected of gender-based violence in Sweden.[4] This implies that having a violent father increases the victimization likelihood of the daughter by 105 percent relative to daughters

[4] Appendix Table A4 reports the OLS estimates that correspond to the estimates plotted in Figure 5, which include the sample of women conditional on ever cohabiting with a partner. Appendix Table A5 reports the OLS estimates that correspond to the estimates plotted in Figure A4, which include all women regardless of cohabitation status.

without a violent father. The odds ratio estimates in Appendix Figure A2 show that daughters with GBV-suspected fathers are 2.4 times more likely to live together with violent partners compared to those without violent fathers.[5]

Figure 5: Intergenerational Transmission of GBV Victimization



Notes: This figure illustrates the intergenerational transmission of victimization based on gender-based violence in Sweden. The sample includes all women born between 1970 and 1995 in Sweden, including those who have not cohabited with a partner. The blue bar reports the coefficient from a linear probability model regressing an indicator for the daughter cohabiting with a partner who was suspected of GBV on an indicator for the father being suspected of GBV, without controls. The red bar adds demographic controls, including birth-year fixed effects for father and daughter, indicators for whether the mother, father, or daughter is foreign born, and birth-order indicators from both parents. The green bar adds socioeconomic controls: parental educational attainment (high school and university) at birth, employment status at birth, and adjusted parental earnings at birth. The yellow bar adds neighborhood controls, including parish population, immigrant share, employment rate, average earnings, share of university-educated residents, number of offenders per 100K, and assault and homicide rates. The orange bar uses a matched control group based on parental immigrant status, employment at birth, earnings quintiles, birth order, parental age (in 5-year bins), and parental education (less than high school, high school, more than high school), and reports the corresponding coefficient estimate. Standard errors are clustered at the father level. All bars display 95% confidence intervals.

The remaining bars in Figure 5 gradually add demographic controls, socioeconomic controls, and neighborhood controls, with LPM estimates only slightly declining from 9.1 to 8.2 p.p. The orange bar on the far right shows the estimate from a matched sample where we select women for the control group who are observationally identical on a wide range of variables: parental

[5] Appendix Table A7 provides the corresponding odds ratio estimates. We also provide the odds ratio estimates conditional on ever cohabiting with a partner in Appendix Figure A3 and Table A8.

immigrant status, employment at birth, earnings quintiles at birth, birth order, parental age in five-year bins, and parental education. The intergenerational association declines only slightly to 6.6 percentage points in the matched sample, implying a 68 percent increase in the likelihood of experiencing GBV victimization from exposure to a GBV father. In this matched sample, the odds ratio estimates in Appendix Figure A2 show that daughters with GBV-suspected fathers are 1.7 times more likely to cohabit with violent partners in adulthood compared to otherwise similar daughters who did not have a violent father.

These findings provide the first large-scale evidence that exposure to fathers who commit gender-based violence is a powerful predictor of both sons' and daughters' trajectories in adulthood. Sons who grow up with fathers suspected of gender-based violence are substantially more likely to commit gender-based violence themselves, even after accounting for a rich set of demographic, socioeconomic, and neighborhood characteristics and comparing them with observationally identical men.

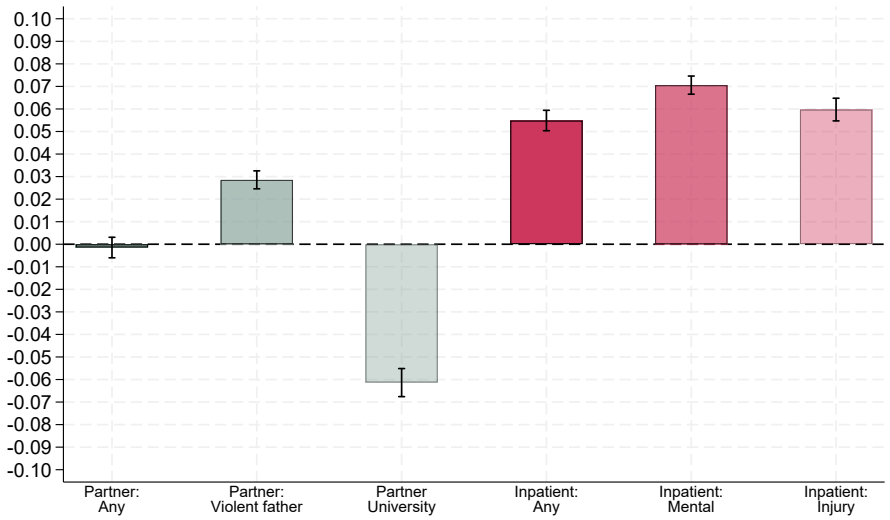
Daughters exposed to paternal violence also face significantly elevated risks: they are far more likely to form cohabiting relationships with men who have histories of violent behavior, and this pattern persists even when comparing them to closely matched control groups. The consistency of these results across multiple specifications points to a potential learning mechanism through which gender-based violence is transmitted across generations, shaping both perpetration and victimization risks. These patterns highlight how early-life exposure to GBV role models can normalize violence against women, influencing the partners children choose and the ways in which they navigate conflict in adulthood.

3.3 Consequences of Exposure to an Abusive Father on Partnership and Health Outcomes in Adulthood

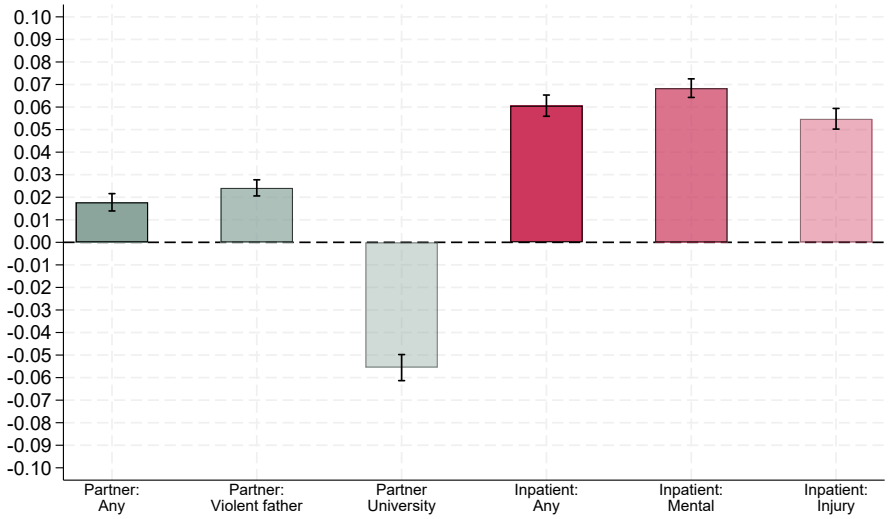
Beyond its direct effects on GBV perpetration and victimization, exposure to fathers who commit GBV may have a broader set of consequences for children's development. In this section, we examine additional deleterious impacts of such exposure, focusing on partnership formation, partner characteristics, and health outcomes.

Figure 6: Exposure to GBV Fathers and Children's Partnership and Health Outcomes

(a) Sons



(b) Daughters



Notes: This figure plots the coefficient estimates from a linear probability model regressing six outcomes (defined in text) on an indicator for the father being suspected of GBV on for sons in Panel A and daughters in Panel B. We match the children with abusive fathers to a control group based on parental immigrant status, employment at birth, earnings quintiles, birth order, parental age (in 5-year bins), and parental education (less than high school, high school, more than high school). All bars display 95% confidence intervals.

Figure 6 reports linear probability model estimates for six outcomes, separately for sons and daughters. For each gender, we present results using the matched sample described in the previous sections, relegating estimates that instead only include rich demographic, socioeconomic,

and neighborhood controls to the appendix.[6]

For sons, exposure to an abusive father is associated with worse partnership quality and health outcomes. While the probability of forming any partnership is essentially unchanged, sons are 2.9 percentage points more likely to partner with someone whose father was also suspected of GBV. Compared with the baseline prevalence of 10.7 percent, this represents a 27 percent increase. At the same time, they are 6.1 percentage points less likely to have a university-educated partner, a 10 percent decline relative to the baseline mean of 58.9 percent.

The negative health consequences for sons are particularly large. Exposure to an abusive father increases the probability of any inpatient hospitalization by 5.5 percentage points relative to a baseline of 74.7 percent. Narrowing the focus to specific health outcomes, we observe a 7.1 percentage-point increase in mental-health admissions, approximately 50 percent above the baseline mean of 13.8 percent. We also estimate a 6 percentage point increase in injury-related admissions. Compared to the baseline prevalence of 31.7 percent, this constitutes a 19 percent increase. These magnitudes imply sizable and persistent health burdens associated with childhood exposure to GBV.

Daughters display broadly similar patterns. In the matched sample, daughters are 5.6 percentage points less likely to have a university-educated partner compared to a mean of 41.9 percent, a 13 percent decline. Thus, as with sons, early-life exposure to violence is associated with less favorable socioeconomic matching in adulthood.

Health effects for daughters are also substantial. The probability of any inpatient hospitalization increases by 6.1 percentage points relative to a baseline of 72.4 percent (an 8 percent increase).[7] Mental-health admissions rise by 6.8 percentage points from 15.3 percent–approximately a 45 percent increase–and injury-related admissions increase by 5.5 percentage points from 23.6 percent, a 23 percent increase. These large increases mirror the patterns observed for sons and suggest that exposure to an abusive father is associated with elevated psychological distress and greater risk of serious physical harm well into adulthood.

[6]Appendix Figure A6 presents the results with controls. Appendix Tables A9 and A10 provide corresponding estimates in table format, including outcome means.

[7]We exclude inpatient visits for childbirth and pregnancy-related visits in defining an indicator for having any inpatient visits.

These results suggest that abusive fathers have far-reaching consequences on their children's lives. These men provide negative role models that affect the subsequent relationship patterns of their children, both in terms of their perpetration of gender-based violence, but also the broader quality of their partners. Their children also experience a clear increase in the likelihood of mental health challenges well into adulthood. The magnitudes of these correlations–often on the order of 20-50 percent increases relative to baseline risks–underscore that early-life exposure to gender-based violence strongly influences multiple dimensions of adult well-being.

4 Breaking the Transmission of GBV

4.1 Impacts from Quasi-Random Father Removal

The correlational evidence that exposure to GBV fathers leads to greater perpetration and victimization is striking, but it may not be causal. Even with the matched comparison group, there may be other unobservable features of these families that lead to a greater risk of GBV perpetration for both fathers and sons.

Furthermore, even if there is a causal link between fathers and sons committing GBV, it is important to determine whether this correlation is explained by a genetic or innate characteristic that cannot be changed, or by learned behavior, such that reduced exposure to GBV fathers can reduce future perpetration by sons. Therefore, the impact of removing a GBV father is empirically ambiguous. If GBV is an immutable characteristic, removing fathers will have no impact. On the other hand, even if sons learn to commit GBV from their fathers, it is not clear that removing the fathers will be a net positive.

Specifically, removing an abusive father from the household may reduce children's exposure to harmful social learning mechanisms, thereby weakening the channel through which violent behavior is modeled and reproduced across generations (Bandura, 1977; Ehrensaft and Langhinrichsen-Rohling, 2022; Kimber *et al.*, 2018). Removing these fathers may also allow mothers to flourish, improving the child's home environment. At the same time, prior research has demonstrated extensive negative impacts on children from divorce (Johnston *et al.*, 2025) and

parental incarceration (Grönqvist *et al.*, 2025). The negative impacts on household income from fathers leaving the household could be especially problematic given that several papers show that negative shocks to household income increase the risk of domestic violence (Bhalotra *et al.*, 2025; Erten *et al.*, 2022; Carr and Packham, 2021; Leslie and Wilson, 2020). In the context of Sweden, event-study estimates reported in Appendix Figure A5 reveal a sharp decline in household income following GBV father removal for both sons and daughters.[8] At the time of separation, household income drops by roughly SEK 150,000, amounting to about half of the average pre-separation income of SEK 300,000–350,000. Although there is a small rebound of about SEK 20,000 the year after, income remains persistently low thereafter. In the long term, these children experience income declines in their primary household of approximately SEK 130,000, or 40% below baseline levels, even a decade after separation.

To address these questions and isolate the causal impact of removing GBV fathers on children's outcomes, we implement a judge instrumental variables design that exploits the quasi-random assignment of criminal cases to judges who differ in their propensity to remove defendants from their households. This design isolates the causal effects of father removal by comparing women who are observably and unobservably similar, but who–solely due to judicial assignment–experience separation in one case and not in the other. The approach also directly addresses concerns about whether policy can meaningfully induce separation. In Sweden, prison sentences are typically short. This implies that any long-run effects on children's subsequent perpetration or victimization of GBV is likely only possible if incarceration facilitates a more durable separation than the sentence itself would mechanically generate. We test this possibility directly.

We closely follow the approach in Grönqvist *et al.* (2025), but restrict attention to fathers suspected of perpetrating gender-based violence and exploit quasi-random variation in the leniency of the judge assigned to their cases. Fathers whose cases are heard by less lenient judges face a higher likelihood of incarceration or court-ordered removal, whereas fathers assigned to more lenient judges are less likely to be removed. Comparing these otherwise similar fathers pro-

[8] We track household income for mothers, who generally retain primary custody of children following separation. We include calendar-year fixed effects and child-birth cohort fixed effects to control for broader time trends and cohort-specific patterns in household income, and we cluster standard errors at the father level.

vides quasi-experimental variation in exposure to abusive fathers during childhood. The design identifies the local average treatment effect (LATE) of father removal for children whose fathers' household separation is sensitive to which judge hears the case, i.e., fathers at the margin of being removed.

We focus on children aged 0-18 at the time of their fathers' trial for suspected gender-based violence. We restrict the sample to children who were living with their father in the year before the trial. The first trials in our sample begin in 1996, and we include trials through 2000 (but not later) to ensure that we can observe children's GBV outcomes in adulthood.

Let i index children, f their father, and c the criminal case involving the father, and consider a model that relates outcomes such as son's likelihood of being suspected of gender-based violence in adulthood to an indicator for whether the father was incarcerated during childhood, $Prison_{fct}$:

$$Y_{ifct} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 Prison_{fct} + \beta_2 \mathbf{X}_{ifct} + \varepsilon_{ifct}, \tag{1}$$

where Y_{ifct} is a child's adulthood GBV outcome—perpetration for sons or partnering with a violent man for daughters; $Prison_{fct}$ indicates whether the father received a prison sentence (and was therefore removed from the household) following case c; and $\mathbf{X}_{ifct}$ is a vector of controls including the child's sex, birth order, migration status, and age at trial; the number of children in the family; the father's migration status, age, education, employment in the year before trial, and pretrial earnings; and the household's disposable income in the year before trial.

The main challenge for causal inference is that OLS estimates of Equation 1 are likely to be upward-biased due to unobserved characteristics transmitted across generations. For instance, gender-based violence could be correlated across generations due to unobservable factors common to fathers and children, including attaining lower levels of education or living in a high-crime neighborhood.[9]

[9]The direction of bias is, however, ambiguous since judges may view certain characteristics such as substance abuse or mental health issues as mitigating and thus opt for leniency, even though these characteristics are correlated with worse future outcomes (Agan *et al.*, 2023; Grönqvist *et al.*, 2025); conversely, judges may impose harsher sanctions on fathers perceived as particularly dangerous in gender-based violence cases. As a result, OLS comparisons cannot credibly disentangle the causal impact of paternal incarceration from these underlying differences.

Instrumental Variable We construct our instrument using the as-good-as-random assignment of cases to judges within district courts following Grönqvist *et al.* (2025). During our study period, Swedish courts used a computerized system that allocated cases randomly to judges, conditional on a small set of administrative strata. Appendix A provides an overview of the Swedish court system and describes the process of judicial assignment. Judges differ substantially in their propensity to impose prison sentences, even after accounting for case composition. We construct a leave-out judge-year incarceration rate as the average probability that the judge sentenced *other* defendants to prison in the same year. This ensures that the instrument is not mechanically correlated with the child outcomes we study and avoids precision inflation that can arise when instruments are constructed using estimation-sample outcomes. Our estimates are robust, however, to various alternatie approaches to constructing the instrument.

More specifically, we construct the instrument as a residualized, leave-out measure of judge stringency that aligns with the level at which random assignment occurs, i.e., court-by-year-by-randomization strata. Because cases were randomly assigned within age and crime-type groups, we partial out court-by-year-by-strata fixed effects when constructing the instrument (Grönqvist *et al.*, 2025; Agan *et al.*, 2023; Dobbie *et al.*, 2018). The randomization strata consist of five categories: juveniles under 18, juveniles aged 19-21, least serious crimes, most serious crimes, and other crimes.[10] This structure ensures that comparisons are restricted to defendants who could have been assigned to the same judges. As a result, the within-cell variation in our instrument captures differences in a quasi-randomly assigned judge's likelihood of imposing a prison sentence relative to otherwise similar cases heard in the same court and year.

First Stage Our first-stage regression examines the relationship between judge stringency Z_{fctj} and father incarceration $Prison_{fctj}$. We estimate the following specification for individual i with

[10]These crime categories were developed using information from interviews with court staff and a review of court records. Offenses classified as least serious are those carrying a maximum sentence of six months, whereas the most serious category includes crimes such as murder, kidnapping, arson, robbery, rape, aggravated assault, and domestic violence. Juveniles charged with these severe offenses are also placed in the serious-crime group. For roughly 5 percent of cases where the Convictions Register lacks offense details, we rely on the Suspicion Register to assign the appropriate crime category.

father f who is charged in case c and assigned to judge j using OLS:

$$Prison_{fctj} = \pi_0 + \pi_1 Z_{fctj} + \pi_2 \mathbf{X}_{ifct} + u_{ifctj}, \tag{2}$$

where Z_{fctj} is our leave-out judge incarceration stringency measure, and the vector $\mathbf{X}_{ifct}$ includes court-by-year-by-strata fixed effects and, in some specifications, control variables. The control variables include the child's sex, birth order, migration status, and age at trial; the number of children in the family; the father's migration status, age, education, employment in the year before trial, and pretrial earnings; and the household's disposable income in the year before trial. Robust standard errors are two-way clustered at the father and court section level.

Table 2: First Stage Results

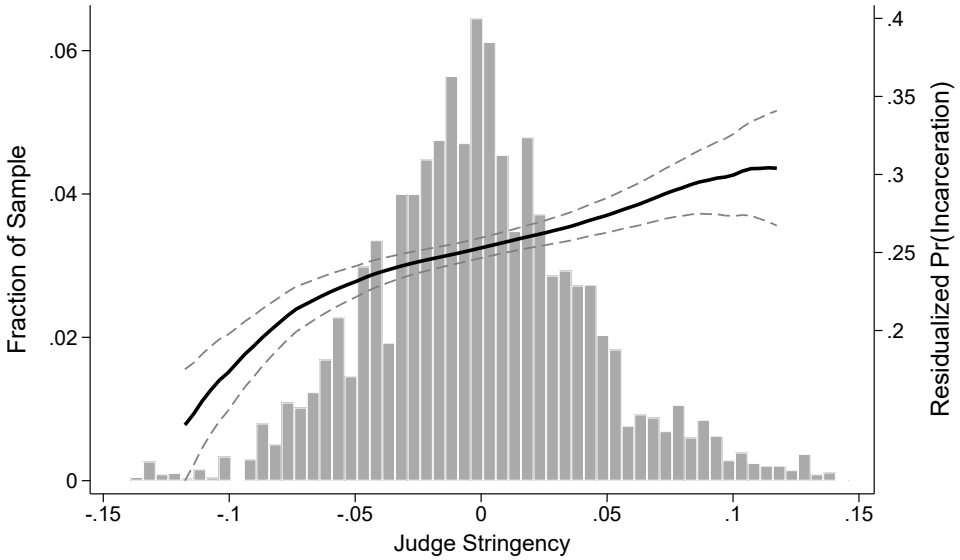
	Sample Mean	Judge Stringency	
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Paternal Incarceration	0.171	0.457***	0.464***
	(0.377)	(0.131)	(0.134)
Sanderson-Windmeijer F-stat			12.06
Cragg-Donald F-stat			32.12
Court x Year x Strata FE	–	Yes	Yes
Controls	–	No	Yes
Observations		16,684	16,684

Notes: This table reports first stage results. Judge stringency is estimated using data from other cases assigned to a section in the same year. Column 1 reports the mean and standard deviation of the dependent variable (father incarceration). Column 2 reports estimates from an OLS regression of father incarceration on judge stringency, controlling for only court-by-year-by-strata fixed effects. Column 3 adds controls, including the child's sex, birth order, migration status, and age at trial; the number of children in the family; the father's migration status, age, education, employment in the year before trial, and pretrial earnings; and the household's disposable income in the year before trial. All regressions are run at the child level. Standard errors are two-way clustered at the father and section levels. ***, **, and * denote significance at the 1, 5, and 10 percent levels.

Table 2 presents the first-stage results from estimating Equation 2. Column 1 reports the average incarceration rate among fathers suspected of gender-based violence in our estimation sample. Column 2 presents first-stage results controlling only for court-by-year-by-strata fixed

effects. Column 3 adds the baseline characteristics reported in the table notes and indicators for any missing baseline characteristics. The estimate including all controls (column 3) shows that having a father assigned to a judge who is 10 percentage points more likely to incarcerate increases the probability of incarceration by 3.75 percentage points. The Sanderson-Windmeijer and Cragg Donald F statistics are both high, suggesting that the instrument is a strong predictor.

Figure 7: Distribution of Judge Stringency and First Stage



Note: This figure displays the distribution of the judge stringency measure, which is constructed using data from other cases assigned to the same judge in a given year, following the method outlined in Section 4. The solid line reports a local linear regression of incarceration on judge stringency. The dashed lines show 90 percent confidence intervals.

Figure 7 presents a nonparametric visualization of the same first-stage relationship. The figure shows that the residualized judge instrument strongly predicts parental incarceration, with the likelihood of incarceration rising monotonically and roughly linearly with judge stringency. In line with prior studies (e.g., Bhuller *et al.*, 2020; Grönqvist *et al.*, 2025), the probability of incarceration does not increase one-for-one with our measure of judge stringency, likely reflecting attenuation from measurement error. For instance, judge stringency may vary over the course of the year, or decisions may be partly influenced by lay jurors, both of which can introduce noise into the leave-out measure. Overall, the evidence reinforces that judge assignment is a strong

predictor of parental incarceration in our context.

Independence and Exclusion An additional condition required to interpret our two-stage least squares estimates as the LATE of incarcerating abusive fathers is that judge assignment affects child outcomes only through its impact on the probability that the father is incarcerated. Table 3 provides evidence consistent with this exclusion restriction. In Column 1, we estimate a linear probability model to examine whether baseline characteristics of the child, their father, or the case predict the father's incarceration. Column 2 tests whether these same characteristics predict our residualized judge stringency measure using the same specification. Both models include court-by-year-by-strata fixed effects and two-way clustered standard errors at the family and court-section level. As expected, observable characteristics strongly predict incarceration, but they are not systematically related to judge stringency. These results indicate that judges with different incarceration tendencies are assigned very similar cases, consistent with the randomized assignment process described earlier.

The exclusion restriction may still be violated if judge assignment affects child outcomes through channels other than the father's incarceration. This assumption is fundamentally untestable, and our estimates should be interpreted with this caveat in mind. Nonetheless, we argue that the exclusion restriction is plausible in our context. The Swedish criminal justice system places strict limits on judicial discretion: judges must choose from a narrow set of punishment types, and sentence lengths are guided by mandatory national sentencing guidelines issued by the Supreme Court and the Prosecutor Authority. These institutional features reduce the scope for judges to systematically affect defendants in ways unrelated to the incarceration margin.

Table 3: Test of Randomization

	Father Incarcerated	Judge Stringency
	(1)	(2)
Child is male	0.00518	-0.00008
	(0.00650)	(0.00059)
Child is foreign born	-0.00240	0.00070
	(0.01884)	(0.00168)
Child age at trial	-0.00060	0.00014
	(0.00107)	(0.00010)
Child is a second child	0.00484	0.00021
	(0.00570)	(0.00051)
Child is a third child	0.00604	0.00029
	(0.00965)	(0.00089)
Child is a forth child or higher child	0.00405	0.00356**
	(0.01529)	(0.00147)
Father age at trial	-0.00030	-0.00005
	(0.00090)	(0.00008)
Father has at least some college	-0.00059	0.00077
	(0.02915)	(0.00280)
Father has high school degree	-0.00859	0.00073
	(0.02607)	(0.00241)
Father has education up to compulsory school	0.02805	0.00210
	(0.02457)	(0.00248)
Father earnings in 3 years before trial	-0.00001	0.00000
	(0.00001)	(0.00000)
Family disposable income in 3 years before trial	0.03109**	-0.00181
	(0.01552)	(0.00146)
Father employment in 3 years before trial	0.00858	-0.00094
	(0.02106)	(0.00225)
Father conviction in 3 years before trial	0.08532***	0.00063
	(0.01114)	(0.00092)
Average court processing time	0.00019	-0.00003
	(0.00015)	(0.00004)
Joint F-Test	[0.00000]	[0.48448]
Observations	16,684	16,684

Notes: This table reports reduced-form tests of the random assignment of cases to court sections. Column 1 presents OLS estimates from regressing father incarceration on the listed covariates, controlling for court-by-year-by-strata fixed effects. Column 2 presents analogous OLS estimates where the dependent variable is judge stringency. Both regressions also include indicators for missing values. The p-values at the bottom of Columns 1-2 correspond to F-tests of the joint significance of all listed covariates and missing-value indicators. Standard errors are two-way clustered at the parent and section levels. ***, **, and * denote significance at the 1, 5, and 10 percent levels.

Furthermore, other courtroom actors such as prosecutors and lay jurors are assigned independently of the judge. This institutional separation makes it unlikely that judge assignment is correlated with the assignment of other actors who might independently affect defendants or their families. While we cannot completely rule out all alternative channels, such as small differences in how quickly judges process case paperwork, we view them as unlikely to meaningfully bias our two stage least squares estimates.

Short Prison Sentences Facilitate Longer Separations A common refrain in this literature is that "nothing works" to encourage women to exit abusive relationships, reflecting the substantial and overlapping barriers that make separation extraordinarily difficult. Women are often implicitly blamed for returning to partners, and short-term separations are frequently followed by reunification, a so-called "boomerang effect" (Goodmark, 2012; Anderson *et al.*, 2003). However, a large body of research shows that women in abusive relationships are often economically dependent on their partners and have limited access to affordable housing and fears of financial instability following separation, all of which reduce the feasibility of leaving (Farmer and Tiefenthaler, 1997; Baker *et al.*, 2010; Adams *et al.*, 2024). Psychological factors, including trauma bonding, diminished self-efficacy, and manipulation by the abuser, can further impede exit (Dutton and Painter, 1993; Lahav, 2023). Stigma towards separation, cultural norms on gender relations, or legal barriers against divorce can also deter women from leaving abusive relationships (Stevenson and Wolfers, 2006).

This literature leads to two conclusions. First, it suggests that it may be difficult for policy levers to accomplish separations from abusive partners. Second, it suggests that women who are able to unilaterally initiate a divorce or separation may be unobservably different from women who are not. In particular, they may have more confidence, greater access to resources, or more supportive social networks. These unobserved factors could also lead to more favorable outcomes for their children. If this is true, then any reductions in sons' GBV perpetration among a sample of women who endogenously leave an abusive marriage could fail to generalize to a broader sample of women where separationgs are generated via policy interventions.

The median prison sentence in our sample, as estimated in Table 5, is short: three months. As a result, any estimated effects will not be mechanically driven by prolonged physical separation during incarceration itself. Therefore, our first impact of interest is whether prison sentences lead to longer-term separations in GBV families. If the prevailing narrative that "nothing works" is correct, even a state-mandated short-term separation may fail to generate lasting change. Alternatively, a short but externally imposed separation may provide critical breathing room, giving women time to relocate, adjust finances, or sever ties with the abuser's broader social network. This may, in turn, enable women in abusive relationships to achieve more durable separations from abusive partners.

We test this hypothesis in Table 4. We find evidence that father incarceration substantially increases the likelihood of sustained separation. In the pooled sample (ages 0-18), incarceration significantly reduces the probability that the son lives with the father in each of the five years following conviction, with effects that grow in magnitude over time. The first-row estimate in column 1 indicates that the probability of living with the father declines by 72.7 p.p. in the five years after the conviction, corresponding to a reduction of 63% relative to complier control mean.

The estimated effects are particularly strong and consistently statistically significant for children exposed at younger ages (0-11). For this group, incarceration reduces co-residence with the father in every post-conviction year, with an average reduction of 78.2 p.p (or 66% decline relative to complier control mean). In contrast, the estimates for adolescents (ages 12-18) are smaller and imprecisely estimated, suggesting weaker or less persistent separation effects at older ages. These findings indicate that even relatively short prison sentences can generate durable household separations, especially when children are young, reducing long-term exposure to abusive fathers during formative years.

Table 4: Father Incarceration and Likelihood of Longer Separations

	Age 0-18	Age 0-11	Age 12-18
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Prob to live with father in 5 years after conviction	-0.727**	-0.782**	-0.299
	(0.354)	(0.340)	(0.642)
	[0.555]	[0.547]	[0.586]
	1.167	*1.183*	*1.177*
Prob to live with father in year 1 after conviction	-0.621*	-0.624*	-0.719
	(0.373)	(0.356)	(0.920)
	[0.656]	[0.642]	[0.708]
	1.150	*1.118*	*1.639*
Prob to live with father in year 2 after conviction	-0.566	-0.669*	0.132
	(0.367)	(0.364)	(0.741)
	[0.593]	[0.576]	[0.657]
	0.994	*1.068*	*0.887*
Prob to live with father in year 3 after conviction	-0.641*	-0.638*	-0.303
	(0.364)	(0.341)	(0.750)
	[0.544]	[0.532]	[0.591]
	1.116	*1.089*	*1.148*
Prob to live with father in year 4 after conviction	-0.872**	-0.922**	-0.498
	(0.439)	(0.418)	(0.811)
	[0.507]	[0.503]	[0.521]
	1.251	*1.274*	*1.206*
Prob to live with father in year 5 after conviction	-0.937**	-1.055**	-0.107
	(0.460)	(0.451)	(0.857)
	[0.476]	[0.481]	[0.455]
	1.325	*1.363*	*1.006*
Court x Year x Strata FE	Yes	Yes	Yes
Balancing Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	8,771	6,923	1,848

Notes: This table reports two-stage least squares estimates of the impact of father incarceration on the mother's probability of separating at a particular year (1 year, 2 years, 3 years) after the incarceration and staying separated until year 5. Columns 1-3 reports two-stage least squares estimates that instrument for paternal incarceration using judge stringency. All regressions control for court-by-year-by-strata fixed effects and controls, including the child's sex, birth order, migration status, and age at trial; the number of children in the family; the father's migration status, age, education, employment in the year before trial, and pretrial earnings; and the household's disposable income in the year before trial. Dependent variable means are in square brackets. The complier control means (CCM) are italicized and listed in the rows below outcome means. Standard errors are two-way clustered at the father and section levels. ***, **, and * denote significance at the 1, 5, and 10 percent levels.

Impacts on GBV Perpetration and Victimization Table 5 presents two-stage least squares estimates of the impact of incarceration of fathers suspected of gender-based violence on an indicator of the son being suspected of any violence against women (Panel A), and an indicator of the daughter cohabiting with a partner suspected of gender-based violence (Panel B). Across all estimates, judge stringency is used as an instrument for incarceration of fathers suspected of gender-based violence. The dependent variable means are reported in square parentheses under the coefficient estimates. Column 1 reports estimates pooling separations due to father incarceration occurring between ages 0 and 18. Column 2 restricts the sample to separations occurring between ages 0 and 11, corresponding to early childhood, while Column 3 focuses on separations occurring between ages 12 and 18, capturing adolescence.

The two-stage least squares estimates reported in Panel A of Table 5 indicate sizable negative effects of father incarceration on sons' later perpetration of gender-based violence. The pooled estimate in column 1 indicates that being separated from abusive fathers due to the father's incarceration reduces the probability of the son being suspected of any violence against women by 53.9 percentage points (94% compared to the control complier mean). Column 2 shows that the removal of GBV fathers occurring between ages 0 and 11 leads to a large and statistically significant decline of 64.4 p.p. in sons' later perpetration. Relative to the complier control mean of 0.731, this corresponds to an approximately 88 percent reduction in the likelihood of being suspected of GBV during adulthood. In contrast, Column 3 shows that removal of GBV fathers during adolescence (ages 12–18) has a small and statistically insignificant effect. These results suggest that early childhood is a critical period during which exposure to paternal behavior shapes later outcomes. Removing fathers during formative years may prevent the internalization or imitation of violent behaviors. By adolescence, however, such behaviors may already be established, rendering later separations less effective at disrupting the intergenerational transmission of GBV.

For daughters, the pooled estimate (ages 0–18) reported in column 1 of Panel B is negative and statistically significant, indicating that removal of abusive fathers reduces the likelihood of cohabiting with a partner suspected of GBV for the daughters during adulthood. The magnitude of the estimate suggests a decline of 64.8 p.p. in the probability of cohabitation with an abusive

partner, corresponding to a decline of 82% relative to complier control mean. However, when separating by age, the estimates for both early childhood and adolescence are imprecisely estimated and not statistically significant. Thus, while the pooled effect suggests potential protective impacts for daughters, we cannot draw strong conclusions about age-specific mechanisms in their case.

Table 5: Father Incarceration and Child GBV Outcomes in Adulthood

	Ages 0-18	Ages 0-11	Ages 12-18
Panel A: Sons	(1)	(2)	(3)
Suspected of any violence against women	-0.539*	-0.644**	-0.065
	(0.307)	(0.295)	(0.686)
Outcome mean	[0.215]	[0.185]	[0.331]
Complier control mean	*0.571*	*0.731*	*0.026*
Observations	8,771	6,923	1,848
Panel B: Daughters			
Cohabiting with a partner suspected of GBV	-0.648**	-0.405	-2.439
	(0.319)	(0.327)	(2.814)
Outcome mean	[0.188]	[0.168]	[0.266]
Complier control mean	*0.789*	*0.623*	*2.183*
Court x Year x Strata FE	Yes	Yes	Yes
Balancing Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes
	7,913	6,272	1,641

Notes: This table reports two-stage least squares estimates of the impact of father incarceration on children's outcomes. Columns 1-3 report two-stage least squares estimates that instrument for paternal incarceration using judge stringency. All regressions control for court-by-year-by-strata fixed effects and controls, including the child's sex, birth order, migration status, and age at trial; the number of children in the family; the father's migration status, age, education, employment in the year before trial, and pretrial earnings; and the household's disposable income in the year before trial. Dependent variable means are in square brackets. The complier control means (CCM) are italicized and listed in the rows below outcome means. Standard errors are two-way clustered at the parent and section levels. ***, **, and * denote significance at the 1, 5, and 10 percent levels.

Impacts on Other Child Outcomes In this section, we report estimates of the impacts of incarceration of GBV-suspected fathers during ages 0–11 on teenage crime, risky behaviors, IPV, and education outcomes. We begin by examining potential impacts on teenage crime using data from crime and suspicion registers. Table 6 presents two-stage least squares estimates of the impact of father incarceration on a broad set of teenage crime outcomes, focusing on separations

occurring during early childhood (ages 0–11). Column 1 reports estimates for sons, while Column 2 reports estimates for daughters. As in the previous analysis, judge stringency is used as an instrument for paternal incarceration.

The estimates for sons, reported in Panel A, indicate sizable declines across multiple conviction categories. For example, the probability of any criminal conviction between ages 15 and 17 declines by 54.4 p.p., corresponding to an 83 percent reduction relative to the complier control mean. Similarly, threat-related convictions decline by 19.9 p.p. and violent convictions fall by (imprecisely estimated) 23.8 p.p. While not all estimates are statistically significant, the pattern across outcomes points to broad reductions in criminal involvement among sons exposed to early removal of fathers.

Panel B reports analogous estimates for suspicions. The results again indicate negative effects across most categories, with particularly large declines in threat-related suspicions. The estimate implies a reduction of 45.9 p.p, corresponding to a 161 percent decline relative to the control complier mean. Although estimates for other categories are less precise, the overall pattern suggests that father incarceration reduces both formal convictions and interactions with the criminal justice system among sons.

In contrast, the estimates for daughters are smaller in magnitude and generally not statistically significant. While most coefficients are negative, indicating potential reductions in both convictions and suspicions, the effects are imprecisely estimated and do not allow for strong conclusions. An exception is drug-related suspicion, which shows a statistically significant decline of 26.7 percentage points, which corresponds to a sizable decline of 121 percent relative to the control complier mean.

These results complement the main findings on gender-based violence and suggest that early removal of fathers suspected of GBV generates broader behavioral impacts for sons, reducing involvement in both violent and non-violent crime during adolescence. The weaker and less precise effects for daughters are consistent with the patterns observed in the GBV outcomes, pointing to gender differences in the transmission of behavioral responses to paternal incarceration.

Table 6: Father Incarceration and Teenage Crime Outcomes

	Age 0-11	
	Sons	Daughters
	(1)	(2)
Panel A: Convictions		
Criminal conviction at ages 15-17	-0.544*	-0.060
	(0.313)	(0.236)
Outcome mean	[0.271]	[0.131]
Control complier mean	0.654	0.174
Drug conviction at ages 15-17	-0.164	-0.090
	(0.156)	(0.086)
Outcome mean	[0.042]	[0.012]
Control complier mean	0.170	0.115
Violent conviction at ages 15-17	-0.238	-0.087
	(0.171)	(0.112)
Outcome mean	[0.075]	[0.028]
Control complier mean	0.143	0.030
Threat conviction at ages 15-17	-0.199*	-0.005
	(0.107)	(0.033)
Outcome mean	[0.018]	[0.003]
Control complier mean	0.145	0.002
Panel B: Suspicions		
Criminal suspicion at ages 15-17	-0.447	-0.335
	(0.310)	(0.285)
Outcome mean	[0.372]	[0.183]
Control complier mean	0.472	0.363
Drug suspicion at ages 15-17	0.002	-0.267*
	(0.173)	(0.152)
Outcome mean	[0.107]	[0.030]
Control complier mean	0.062	0.221
Violent suspicion at ages 15-17	-0.188	-0.220
	(0.229)	(0.179)
Outcome mean	[0.186]	[0.069]
Control complier mean	0.141	0.129
Threat suspicion at ages 15-17	-0.459**	-0.187
	(0.225)	(0.149)
Outcome mean	[0.112]	[0.037]
Control complier mean	0.285	0.185
Court x Year x Strata FE	Yes	Yes
Balancing Controls	Yes	Yes
Observations	6,923	6,272

Note: This table reports two-stage least squares estimates of the impact of father incarceration at ages 0–11 on children's teenage crime outcomes observed at ages 15-17. Columns 1 and 2 report two-stage least squares estimates for sons and daughters, respectively, instrumenting for paternal incarceration using judge stringency. All regressions control for court-by-year-by-strata fixed effects and controls, including the child's sex, birth order, migration status, and age at trial; the number of children in the family; the father's migration status, age, education, employment in the year before trial, and pretrial earnings; and the household's disposable income in the year before trial. Dependent variable means are in square brackets. The complier control means (CCM) are italicized and listed in the rows below outcome means. Standard errors are two-way clustered at the parent and section levels. ***, **, and * denote significance at the 1, 5, and 10 percent levels.

Table 7 reports two-stage least squares estimates of the impact of father incarceration on teenage mental health outcomes for children exposed at ages 0–11. For sons, there is no evidence of a significant impact on most mental health outcomes, including mental disorders, mood disorders, anxiety, and psychotic disorders. However, there is a small but statistically significant decline in psychiatric care, corresponding to roughly a 100 percent reduction relative to the control complier mean, indicating a substantial decrease in inpatient mental health care utilization. For daughters, the estimates are generally larger in magnitude but imprecise, providing no evidence of a significant impact on most outcomes. One exception is a statistically significant decline in psychotic disorders, which represents a reduction exceeding the control complier mean, though this estimate should be interpreted cautiously given the very low baseline prevalence.

Table 8 examines risky behaviors, IPV-related outcomes, and educational achievement. For sons, there is again no evidence of a significant impact on substance abuse, self-harm, injuries, or educational outcomes. For daughters, there is evidence of improvements along some dimensions, including a statistically significant reduction in IPV-related injuries, corresponding to a decline of roughly 260 percent relative to the control complier mean, and a statistically significant decline in physical inpatient health care utilization, which is close to a 90 percent reduction relative to the control complier mean. There is no evidence of a significant impact on educational achievement, measured by standardized GPA scores at age 16, for either sons or daughters, although the coefficient estimates are positive. Moreover, Appendix Tables A11 and A12 show no evidence of a significant impact on the probability of having a partner, the number of partners, or partner characteristics.

These results indicate meaningful improvements for health and behavioral outcomes in response to incarceration of GBV-suspected fathers, including a decline in psychiatric care among boys and reductions in severe mental health conditions and IPV-related harms among girls. While most estimates are imprecisely estimated, the pattern suggests that early father incarceration does not worsen adolescent outcomes on average and may lead to improvements in specific high-risk behaviors and health outcomes, particularly for daughters.

Table 7: Father Incarceration and Teenage Mental Health Outcomes

	Age 0-11	
	Sons	Daughters
	(1)	(2)
Mental disorder at ages 13–17	0.078	0.293
	(0.081)	(0.181)
	[0.028]	[0.049]
	0.030	*-0.065*
Psychotic disorder at ages 13–17	0.004	-0.013*
	(0.021)	(0.007)
	[0.002]	[0.001]
	0.006	*0.009*
Mood disorder at ages 13–17	-0.023	0.002
	(0.028)	(0.077)
	[0.003]	[0.013]
	0.025	*0.001*
Anxiety disorder at ages 13–17	-0.029	0.103
	(0.036)	(0.095)
	[0.003]	[0.017]
	0.028	*0.014*
Alcohol use disorder at ages 13–17	0.005	0.119
	(0.062)	(0.111)
	[0.016]	[0.018]
	0.004	*-0.060*
Drug use disorder at ages 13–17	0.368	-0.175
	(0.240)	(0.286)
	[0.165]	[0.194]
	-0.094	*0.322*
Addiction care at ages 13–17	-0.000	0.083
	(0.043)	(0.056)
	[0.004]	[0.005]
	-0.017	*-0.006*
Psychiatric care at ages 13–17	-0.036*	0.037
	(0.021)	(0.034)
	[0.002]	[0.003]
	0.036	*-0.030*
Court × Year × Strata FE	Yes	Yes
Balancing Controls	Yes	Yes
Observations	6,923	6,272

Note: This table reports two-stage least squares estimates of the impact of father incarceration at ages 0–11 on children's teenage mental health outcomes observed at ages 13-17. Columns 1 and 2 report two-stage least squares estimates for sons and daughters, respectively, instrumenting for paternal incarceration using judge stringency. All regressions control for court-by-year-by-strata fixed effects and controls, including the child's sex, birth order, migration status, and age at trial; the number of children in the family; the father's migration status, age, education, employment in the year before trial, and pretrial earnings; and the household's disposable income in the year before trial. Dependent variable means are in square brackets. The complier control means (CCM) are italicized and listed in the rows below outcome means. Standard errors are two-way clustered at the parent and section levels. ***, **, and * denote significance at the 1, 5, and 10 percent levels.

Table 8: Father Incarceration and Risky Behaviors, IPV, and Education Outcomes

	Age 0-11	
	Sons	Daughters
	(1)	(2)
Substance abuse at ages 13–17	0.093	0.249
	(0.075)	(0.155)
	[0.024]	[0.030]
	-0.002	*-0.050*
Self-harm at ages 13–17	0.007	-0.046
	(0.044)	(0.101)
	[0.008]	[0.026]
	0.017	*0.146*
Injuries at ages 13–17	-0.153	-0.010
	(0.138)	(0.119)
	[0.063]	[0.034]
	0.119	*0.127*
Injuries from an intimate partner assault at ages 13–17	-0.028	-0.127*
	(0.058)	(0.068)
	[0.006]	[0.003]
	-0.028	*0.048*
Physical inpatient health care at ages 13–17	0.029	-0.362*
	(0.152)	(0.219)
	[0.066]	[0.070]
	0.013	*0.392*
Standardized GPA compulsory school at age 16	0.184	1.380
	(0.665)	(1.255)
	[-0.768]	[-0.447]
	-0.697	*-1.481*
Court × Year × Strata FE	Yes	Yes
Balancing Controls	Yes	Yes
Observations	6,923	6,272

Note: This table reports two-stage least squares estimates of the impact of father incarceration at ages 0–11 on children's risky behaviors and IPV outcomes observed at ages 13-17, and education outcomes observed at age 16. Columns 1 and 2 report two-stage least squares estimates for sons and daughters, respectively, instrumenting for paternal incarceration using judge stringency. All regressions control for court-by-year-by-strata fixed effects and controls, including the child's sex, birth order, migration status, and age at trial; the number of children in the family; the father's migration status, age, education, employment in the year before trial, and pretrial earnings; and the household's disposable income in the year before trial. Dependent variable means are in square brackets. The complier control means (CCM) are italicized and listed in the rows below outcome means. Standard errors are two-way clustered at the parent and section levels. ***, **, and * denote significance at the 1, 5, and 10 percent levels.

Impacts on Other Mother Outcomes Beyond removing a father reducing the degree to which sons and daughters learn to embrace or tolerate violence against women, removing fathers may lead to better outcomes for mothers, including mental health and labor market participation. This improvement in maternal well-being could, in turn, improve children's outcomes.

Table 9 reports two-stage least squares estimates of the impact of father incarceration on mothers' mental health outcomes in the five years following the trial. Across most outcomes, there is no evidence of a significant impact, with estimates imprecisely estimated and close to zero. However, there are notable improvements in substance-related outcomes. In particular, alcohol disorders decline significantly, with estimates implying reductions that exceed the control complier mean, suggesting substantial decreases in alcohol-related problems. Similarly, addiction care utilization declines modestly but significantly, corresponding to a sizable reduction relative to the control complier mean. These findings point to improvements in mothers' substance-related health following the removal of abusive partners.

Table 10 presents estimates for mothers' labor market outcomes over the same horizon. The results show no evidence of a significant impact on employment, earnings, disposable income, or reliance on social assistance. While point estimates vary across specifications, they are imprecisely estimated and do not indicate systematic changes in economic outcomes. Overall, these results suggest that while father incarceration may improve certain aspects of mothers' mental health–particularly related to substance use–it does not lead to detectable changes in the short-run labor market outcomes.

Table 9: Father Incarceration and Maternal Mental Health Outcomes

	Age 0-18	Age 0-11	Age 12-18
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Any mental disorder in 5 years after trial	0.004	0.051	-0.162
	(0.161)	(0.157)	(0.430)
Outcome mean	[0.061]	[0.061]	[0.064]
CCM	*-0.147*	*-0.136*	*-0.193*
Any psychotic disorder in 5 years after trial	0.013	0.063	-0.227
	(0.063)	(0.072)	(0.226)
Outcome mean	[0.009]	[0.008]	[0.011]
CCM	*0.004*	*-0.041*	*0.212*
Any mood disorder in 5 years after trial	0.087	0.135	-0.155
	(0.083)	(0.085)	(0.203)
Outcome mean	[0.019]	[0.020]	[0.015]
CCM	*-0.038*	*-0.058*	*0.053*
Any anxiety disorder in 5 years after trial	0.094	0.082	0.059
	(0.091)	(0.089)	(0.145)
Outcome mean	[0.014]	[0.014]	[0.013]
CCM	*-0.121*	*-0.089*	*-0.148*
Any alcohol disorder in 5 years after trial	-0.150**	-0.130**	-0.218
	(0.075)	(0.061)	(0.241)
Outcome mean	[0.010]	[0.010]	[0.012]
CCM	*0.090*	*0.072*	*0.174*
Any drug disorder in 5 years after trial	-0.539	-0.436	-0.178
	(0.438)	(0.414)	(0.672)
Outcome mean	[0.425]	[0.455]	[0.312]
CCM	*0.604*	*0.525*	*0.395*
Any addiction care in 5 years after trial	-0.079*	-0.088*	0.043
	(0.045)	(0.050)	(0.192)
Outcome mean	[0.012]	[0.011]	[0.014]
CCM	*-0.016*	*-0.011*	*-0.036*
Any psychiatric care in 5 years after trial	0.083	0.180	-0.507
	(0.148)	(0.161)	(0.478)
Outcome mean	[0.046]	[0.047]	[0.040]
CCM	*-0.161*	*-0.226*	*0.287*
Court x Year x Strata FE	Yes	Yes	Yes
Balancing Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	8,771	6,923	1,848

Note: This table reports two-stage least squares estimates of the impact of father incarceration on mothers' mental health outcomes. Columns 1–3 report two-stage least squares estimates for father incarceration at ages 0–18, 0–11, 12–18, respectively, instrumenting for father incarceration using judge stringency. All regressions control for court-by-year-by-strata fixed effects and controls, including the child's sex, birth order, migration status, and age at trial; the number of children in the family; the father's migration status, age, education, employment in the year before trial, and pretrial earnings; and the household's disposable income in the year before trial. Dependent variable means are in square brackets. The complier control means (CCM) are italicized and listed in the rows below outcome means. Standard errors are two-way clustered at the parent and section levels. ***, **, and * denote significance at the 1, 5, and 10 percent levels.

Table 10: Father Incarceration and Maternal Labor Market Outcomes

	Age 0-18	Age 0-11	Age 12-18
Employment in 5 years after trial	0.023	0.154	-1.023
	(0.283)	(0.277)	(1.447)
	[0.456]	[0.442]	[0.515]
	0.540	*0.304*	*2.199*
Earnings in 5 years after trial	-219.805	139.810	-3,427.779
	(671.821)	(643.303)	(4,460.418)
	[1,113.813]	[1,065.817]	[1,307.878]
	1,615.566	*1,086.563*	*5,789.897*
Disposable income in 5 years after trial	181.198	359.617	-1,082.952
	(530.717)	(497.346)	(1,963.486)
	[1,935.828]	[1,947.650]	[1,888.025]
	1,881.710	*1,643.163*	*3,386.469*
Social assistance in 5 years after trial	0.113	-0.035	0.697
	(0.240)	(0.228)	(0.900)
	[0.420]	[0.431]	[0.376]
	0.176	*0.322*	*-0.340*
Court x Year x Strata FE	Yes	Yes	Yes
Balancing Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes
	8,498	6,813	1,685

Note: This table reports two-stage least squares estimates of the impact of father incarceration on mothers' labor market outcomes. Columns 1–3 report two-stage least squares estimates for father incarceration at ages 0–18, 0–11, 12–18, respectively, instrumenting for father incarceration using judge stringency. All regressions control for court-by-year-by-strata fixed effects and controls, including the child's sex, birth order, migration status, and age at trial; the number of children in the family; the father's migration status, age, education, employment in the year before trial, and pretrial earnings; and the household's disposable income in the year before trial. Dependent variable means are in square brackets. The complier control means (CCM) are italicized and listed in the rows below outcome means. Standard errors are two-way clustered at the parent and section levels. ***, **, and * denote significance at the 1, 5, and 10 percent levels.

4.2 External Validity: Family Fixed Effects

The preceding analysis is relevant to families with GBV fathers on the margins of incarceration. However, as we show in Appendix Table A13, among all families with GBV fathers, these families are particularly negatively selected. Both the mother and father are less likely to complete high school, less likely to participate in the labor market, and have lower earnings. They also live in more disadvantaged neighborhoods with a higher share of immigrants, lower employment rate, and higher rates of crime.

This leads to concerns about external validity. Perhaps reduced exposure to less negatively selected GBV fathers does not decrease GBV perpetration and victimization. To address this question, Table 11 presents family fixed effects estimates for all families where the father commits

GBV (columns 1 and 3). Specifically, we estimate the following specification:

$$Y_{ijc} = \alpha_0 + \beta \text{ Separation age 0–11}_{ij} + \delta X_i + \gamma_j + \gamma_c + \varepsilon_{ijc} \tag{3}$$

where Y_{ijc} is an indicator for whether son i in family f in cohort c is suspected of committing violence against women at any point in adulthood (or, alternatively, daughter i in family f in cohort c is exposed to a partner suspected of committing GBV in adulthood); and Separation age 0–11 indicates that the father was removed from the household when the child was ages 0–11. We estimate this specification restricting the sample first two abusive fathers, and then to non-abusive fathers, with separation between ages 12–18 serving as the omitted reference category. X_i denote a vector of controls for birth-year fixed effects for father and birth-order indicators from both parents. We include family fixed effects γ_f and child birth cohort fixed effects γ_c and cluster standard errors at the father level.

The inclusion of family fixed effects enables us to compare outcomes within abusive families, restricting identification to differences between siblings who were separated from an abusive father at different ages. Panel A shows that sons whose abusive fathers were removed at ages 1-11 experience a statistically significant 1.9 p.p. decline in the probability of committing gender-based violence relative to siblings whose fathers were removed at ages 12-18 (column 1), corresponding to a 10 percent reduction relative to the mean outcome. In contrast, column 2 shows a small but statistically significant increase in GBV perpetration for removals of non-violent fathers.

We also estimate the effects of exposure to abusive fathers using a continuous measure of exposure, defined as the number of years of cohabitation between ages 0 and 18:

$$Y_{ijc} = \alpha_0 + \beta \text{ Years of cohabitation ages 0–18}_{ij} + \delta X_i + \gamma_j + \gamma_c + \varepsilon_{ijc} \tag{4}$$

where Years of cohabitation ages 0–18$_{ij}$ represents the number of years the child has cohabited with the father. We again estimate this specification separately by restricting the sample to abusive fathers and non-abusive fathers, respectively. All other variables defined as in equation 3.

In Table 11, column 3 indicates that each additional year of cohabitation with an abusive father

raises a sibling's likelihood of committing gender-based violence in adulthood by approximately 0.29 percentage points. By comparison, column 4 reveals no meaningful association between years spent cohabiting with a non-abusive father and subsequent GBV perpetration risk.

The estimates for daughters in Panel B of Table 11 similarly indicate that longer cohabitation with an abusive father increases the risk of subsequent exposure to gender-based violence, with each additional year raising the probability by about 0.22 percentage points (column 3). By contrast, cohabitation with a non-abusive father is associated with a small decline in GBV exposure (column 4). However, unlike for sons, we do not find evidence that earlier removal of an abusive father reduces daughters' exposure to GBV: the estimate in column 1 is negative but small and imprecisely estimated. Taken together, these results suggest that the intergenerational transmission of violent behavior may be particularly pronounced among boys, especially when exposure to abusive fathers occurs at younger ages.

Table 11: Effects of Father Removal: Family Fixed Effects Estimates

	(1) Violent fathers	(2) Non-violent fathers	(3) Violent fathers	(4) Non-violent fathers
Panel A: Sons				
Separation age 0-11	-0.0185*	0.00620**		
	(0.00970)	(0.00276)		
Years of cohabitation ages 0-18			0.00289***	-4.81e-05
			(0.000838)	(0.000289)
Observations	62,861	418,275	62,861	418,275
R-squared	0.014	0.005	0.015	0.005
Number of fathers	45,714	324,328	45,714	324,328
Mean dep. var.	0.195	0.0947	0.195	0.0947
Panel B: Daughters				
Separation age 0-11	-0.00452	0.00113		
	(0.0101)	(0.00316)		
Years of cohabitation ages 0-18			0.00223**	-0.000559*
			(0.000903)	(0.000322)
Observations	63,424	446,383	63,424	446,383
R-squared	0.008	0.003	0.008	0.003
Number of fathers	46,200	350,327	46,200	350,327
Mean dep. var.	0.203	0.128	0.203	0.128

Notes: The sample is restricted to children who lived with their fathers at birth and separated at some point before age 19. The table reports the estimates for the effects of father removal on sons' GBV perpetration in Panel (a) and daughters' GBV victimization proxied by their cohabitation with a partner suspected of committing GBV by their age at separation in Panel (b). Coefficients reflect the estimated effects of father removal within abusive families, comparing siblings whose abusive father was removed at a younger age vs older age. Standard errors are clustered at the father level.

5 Conclusion

This paper provides the first large-scale administrative evidence that gender-based violence is transmitted across generations through childhood exposure. Using linked population-wide data from Sweden, we show that sons of fathers suspected of gender-based violence are more than twice as likely to commit gender-based violence themselves, and daughters exposed to violent

fathers are almost twice as likely to partner with violent men. These patterns persist after controlling for rich demographic, socioeconomic, and neighborhood characteristics and when comparisons are restricted to closely matched families. The magnitude and robustness of these associations underscore a strong social learning mechanism through which violent behaviors are imitated and victimization risks are shaped early in life.

We then examine whether this intergenerational cycle can be disrupted by reducing children's exposure to GBV fathers. Leveraging quasi-random assignment of cases to judges with differing incarceration propensities, we provide causal evidence that quasi-random removal of GBV fathers weakens the intergenerational transmission of GBV. The judge-IV results show that incarceration of GBV fathers during children's formative years significantly reduces sons' subsequent perpetration risk. These findings demonstrate that GBV is not solely an innate or fixed trait, but rather a behavior that is learned and reinforced through early-life exposure. Family fixed-effects estimates confirm this pattern more broadly within all abusive families, showing that siblings separated from violent fathers at younger ages experience substantially lower risks later in life. For daughters, estimates are generally negative but smaller and less precisely estimated, suggesting that direct behavioral transmission effects may be more substantial between fathers and sons.

Although household income declines substantially following separation, which could have caused an increase in GBV and worse child outcomes more braodly, we find that in addition to a reduction in sons' perpetration of GBV, children of GBV fathersexperience improvements in behavioral outcomes, including reductions in adolescent criminal activity, as well as gains in some health outcomes. At the same time, maternal well-being improves, with reductions in substance-related mental health issues, suggesting that changes in the caregiving environment constitute an additional mechanism through which these effects operate, beyond just reduced exposure to GBV fathers.

Taken together, our results highlight two key mechanisms underlying the intergenerational persistence of GBV: direct exposure to violent behavior towards women and the broader household environment in which children are raised. By reducing children's exposure to GBV fathers

and improving maternal well-being, removal of GBV fathers meaningfully weakens the transmission of GBV across generations. More broadly, our findings imply that GBV is not an immutable trait but a learned behavior shaped by childhood environments. Policies that safely reduce children's exposure to GBV fathers, while mitigating the associated economic harms, have the potential to meaningfully weaken the persistence of GBV across generations.

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Appendix A: Swedish Court System

Sweden's criminal court system is organized into three tiers: district courts, courts of appeal, and the Supreme Court. Most criminal cases are resolved at the district court level, with each district court handling cases arising within its geographic jurisdiction. There are currently 48 district courts in Sweden, and our analysis focuses on criminal cases adjudicated at this level. These courts vary substantially in size: large urban courts, such as those in Stockholm and Göteborg, may employ up to 40 judges, while courts serving more rural areas typically operate with only a small number of judges (Grönqvist *et al.*, 2025).

Swedish district courts are typically organized into divisions (*avdelningar*), which are further subdivided into sections (*rotlar*), although smaller courts may operate with sections only. Each section is staffed by a single judge, a clerk, and several administrative personnel. Judges are generally assigned to sections at the start of each calendar year. While reassignment across sections can occur in subsequent years, many judges remain responsible for the same section for extended periods. Throughout the paper, we treat each section as corresponding to a judge. District court judges are appointed for life and may be removed from office only if they are convicted of a serious criminal offense. Appointment requires a law degree, but prior experience within the court system is not mandatory. In addition, each district court maintains a large pool of politically appointed lay jurors (*nämndemän*), who perform a role analogous to juries in the United States. Lay jurors typically serve 10–15 days per year and are assigned to cases and judges in an essentially random manner (Ahrsjö *et al.*, 2024).

In most district court proceedings, both the verdict and the sentence are jointly determined by the presiding judge and three lay jurors (Grönqvist *et al.*, 2025). After the hearing, the judge presents a summary of the facts of the case and outlines the relevant legal provisions for the lay jurors. The judge and lay jurors then deliberate over the appropriate outcome, including both the verdict and, if applicable, the sentence. When there is disagreement regarding the verdict, a vote is taken to decide the case. The judge and each lay juror carry equal voting weight, with the judge serving as the tiebreaker in the absence of a clear majority. If the defendant is found guilty,

a separate vote determines the sentence. In cases where votes are evenly split across sentencing options, the least severe punishment is selected. If the relative severity of the available sentencing options is ambiguous, the judge again acts as the tiebreaker.

Our empirical approach leverages variation in sentencing severity arising from the random assignment of cases to judges with differing propensities to impose incarceration. Two institutional features of the Swedish criminal justice system make it particularly well suited to this research design. First, during our sample period, nearly all criminal cases were assigned to judges within district courts through a randomization process mandated by government regulation (Förordning (1996:381) med tingsrättsinstruktion, §9). The purpose of this assignment mechanism was to ensure equal treatment before the law. In practice, the random allocation of cases to judges was implemented using a computer system known as MÅHS.

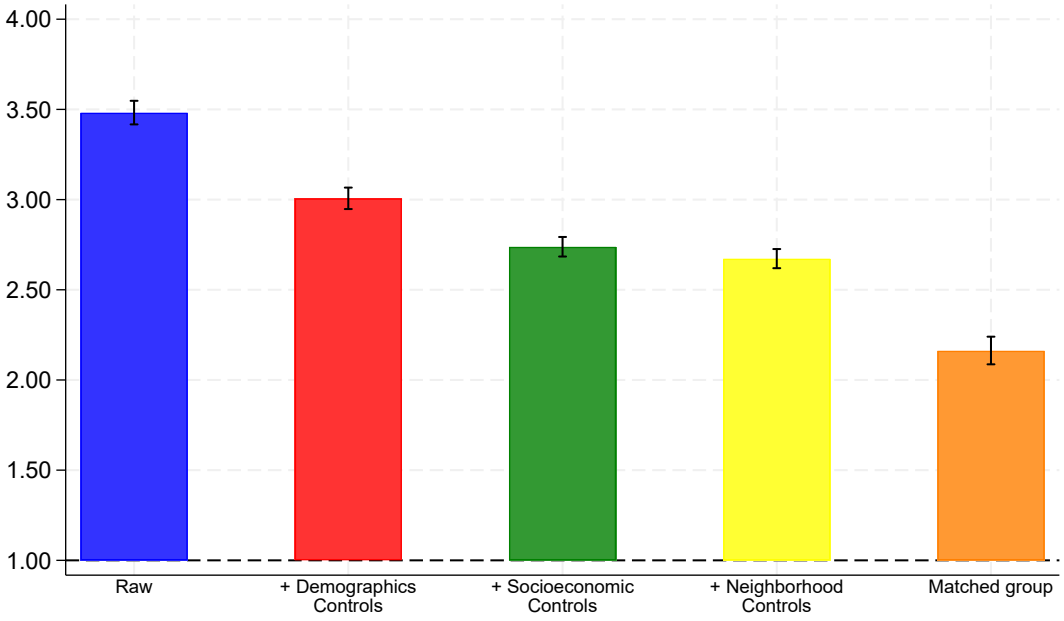
The assignment system allowed for several exceptions, including cases involving juvenile defendants, less serious offenses (such as traffic violations), and very serious crimes (such as murder or rape). These cases were randomly allocated within restricted pools of judges; for example, traffic offenses were randomly assigned only among junior judges. In most district courts, randomization was conducted within cells defined by defendant age and offense category. Juvenile defendants were typically grouped into those under 18 years of age and those aged 19-21, although courts retained discretion over how these age thresholds were applied. Courts also varied in how they classified the severity of different offenses. As we explain in Section 4, these institutional features are incorporated into the construction of our judge stringency measure and case assignment remains random once we condition on defendant age group and offense type.

Second, institutional features of the Swedish criminal justice system substantially limit the channels through which an assigned judge can affect case outcomes aside from the incarceration decision itself. In most cases, the penal code requires judges to impose a single sanction, with only narrow exceptions, such as certain minor offenses for which both probation and a fine may be applied. Consistent with this rule, instances of multiple sanctions are extremely rare in our data, and our results are unaffected when these cases are excluded or when indicators for multiple sanctions are included as controls. Judges retain meaningful discretion over the decision

to incarcerate, but sentence lengths are largely governed by guidelines issued by the Supreme Court and the Prosecutor Authority. Moreover, other courtroom actors—such as prosecutors and lay jurors—are assigned through processes that are independent of judge assignment, making it unlikely that the identity of the judge is systematically correlated with the assignment of other actors who could independently influence defendants' outcomes or those of their children. Finally, the absence of plea bargaining in the Swedish system rules out the possibility that defendants plead guilty in exchange for reduced sentences.

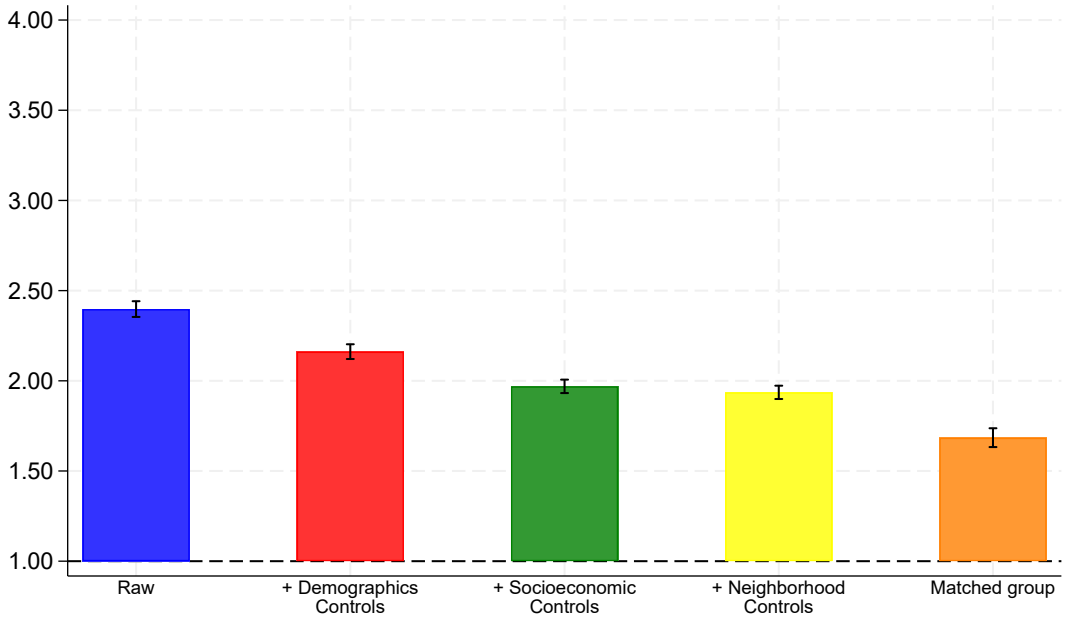
Appendix B: Additional Figures and Tables

Figure A1: Odds Ratios for Sons' GBV Perpetration



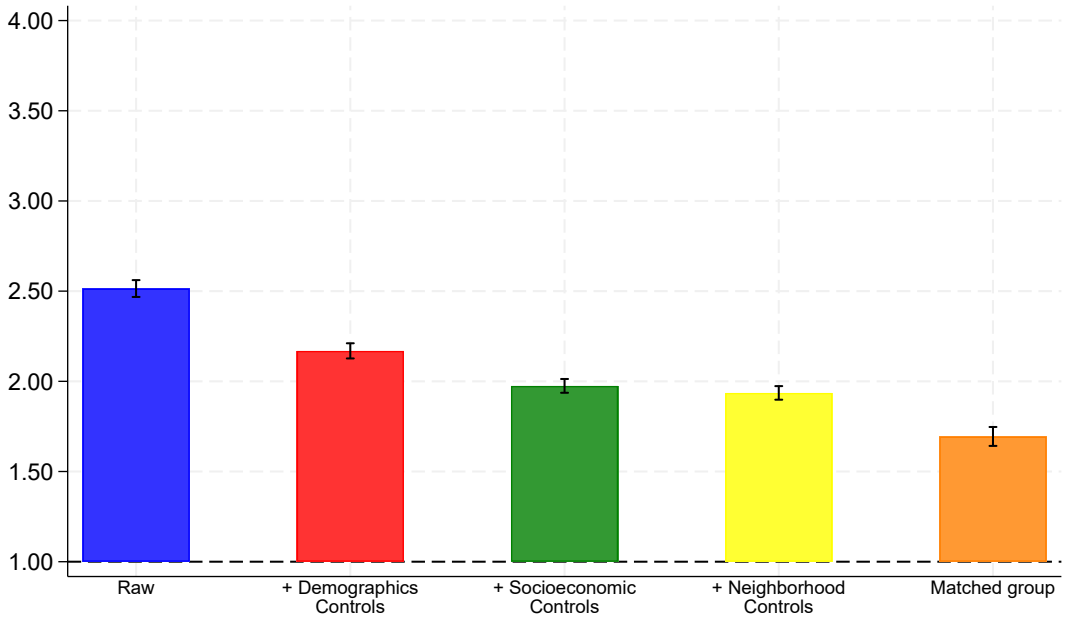
Notes: This figure illustrates the intergenerational transmission of gender-based violence perpetration in Sweden. The blue bar reports the odds ratio for an indicator for the son being suspected of GBV based on an indicator for the father being suspected of GBV, without controls. The red bar adds demographic controls, including birth-year fixed effects for father and son, indicators for whether the mother, father, or son is foreign born, and birth-order indicators from both parents. The green bar adds socioeconomic controls: parental educational attainment (high school and university) at birth, employment status at birth, and adjusted parental earnings at birth. The yellow bar adds neighborhood controls, including parish population, immigrant share, employment rate, average earnings, share of university-educated residents, number of offenders per 100K, and assault and homicide rates. The orange bar uses a matched control group based on parental immigrant status, employment at birth, earnings quintiles, birth order, parental age (in 5-year bins), and parental education (less than high school, high school, more than high school), and reports the corresponding coefficient estimate. All bars display 95% confidence intervals.

Figure A2: Odds Ratios for All Daughters' GBV Victimization



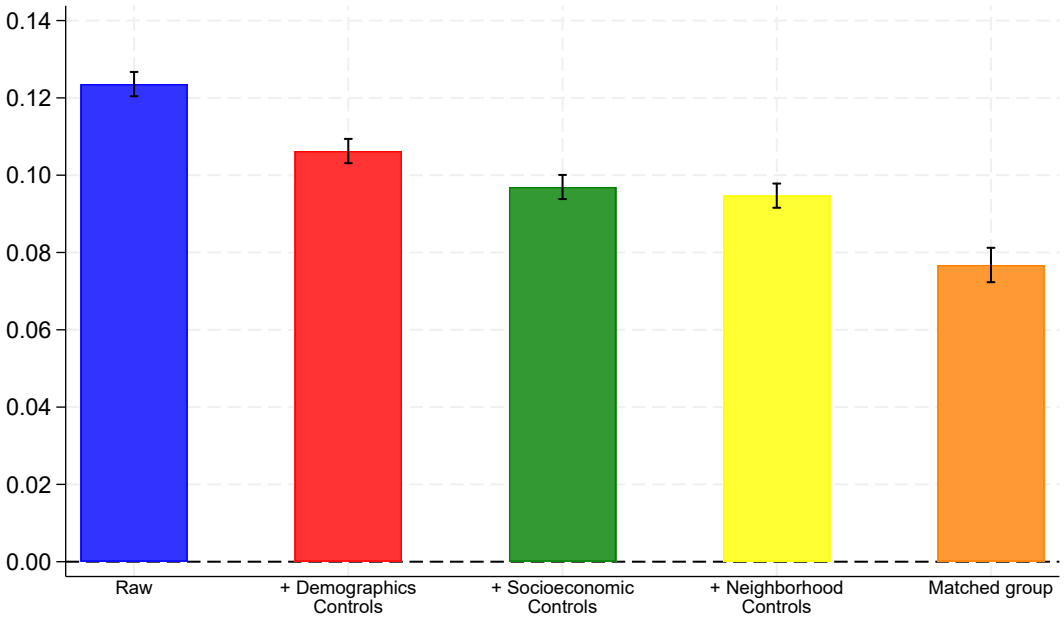
Notes: This figure illustrates the intergenerational transmission of gender-based violence victimization in Sweden. The sample includes all women born from 1970 to 1995 in Sweden. The blue bar reports the odds ratio for an indicator for the daughter cohabiting with a partner suspected of GBV based on an indicator for the father being suspected of GBV, without controls. The red bar adds demographic controls, including birth-year fixed effects for father and daughter, indicators for whether the mother, father, or daughter is foreign born, and birth-order indicators from both parents. The green bar adds socioeconomic controls: parental educational attainment (high school and university) at birth, employment status at birth, and adjusted parental earnings at birth. The yellow bar adds neighborhood controls, including parish population, immigrant share, employment rate, average earnings, share of university-educated residents, number of offenders per 100K, and assault and homicide rates. The orange bar uses a matched control group based on parental immigrant status, employment at birth, earnings quintiles, birth order, parental age (in 5-year bins), and parental education (less than high school, high school, more than high school), and reports the corresponding coefficient estimate. All bars display 95% confidence intervals.

Figure A3: Odds Ratios for Daughters' GBV Victimization Conditional on Having Ever a Partner



Notes: This figure illustrates the intergenerational transmission of gender-based violence victimization in Sweden. The sample includes women born from 1970 to 1995 in Sweden who ever cohabited with a partner. The blue bar reports the odds ratio for an indicator for the daughter cohabiting with a partner suspected of GBV based on an indicator for the father being suspected of GBV, without controls. The red bar adds demographic controls, including birth-year fixed effects for father and daughter, indicators for whether the mother, father, or daughter is foreign born, and birth-order indicators from both parents. The green bar adds socioeconomic controls: parental educational attainment (high school and university) at birth, employment status at birth, and adjusted parental earnings at birth. The yellow bar adds neighborhood controls, including parish population, immigrant share, employment rate, average earnings, share of university-educated residents, number of offenders per 100K, and assault and homicide rates. The orange bar uses a matched control group based on parental immigrant status, employment at birth, earnings quintiles, birth order, parental age (in 5-year bins), and parental education (less than high school, high school, more than high school), and reports the corresponding coefficient estimate. All bars display 95% confidence intervals.

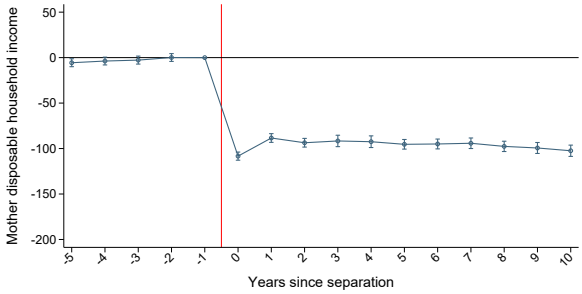
Figure A4: Intergenerational Transmission of GBV Victimization: Linear Probability Estimates



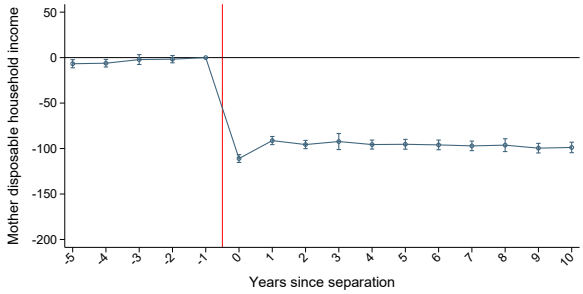
Notes: This figure illustrates the intergenerational transmission of victimization based on gender-based violence in Sweden. The sample is restricted to women who have ever cohabited with a partner. The blue bar reports the coefficient from a linear probability model regressing an indicator for the daughter cohabiting with a partner who was suspected of GBV on an indicator for the father being suspected of GBV, without controls. The red bar adds demographic controls, including birth-year fixed effects for father and daughter, indicators for whether the mother, father, or daughter is foreign born, and birth-order indicators from both parents. The green bar adds socioeconomic controls: parental educational attainment (high school and university) at birth, employment status at birth, and adjusted parental earnings at birth. The yellow bar adds neighborhood controls, including parish population, immigrant share, employment rate, average earnings, share of university-educated residents, number of offenders per 100K, and assault and homicide rates. The orange bar uses a matched control group based on parental immigrant status, employment at birth, earnings quintiles, birth order, parental age (in 5-year bins), and parental education (less than high school, high school, more than high school), and reports the corresponding coefficient estimate. Standard errors are clustered at the father level. All bars display 95% confidence intervals.

Figure A5: Household Income Around Father Removal

(a) Sons with GBV fathers



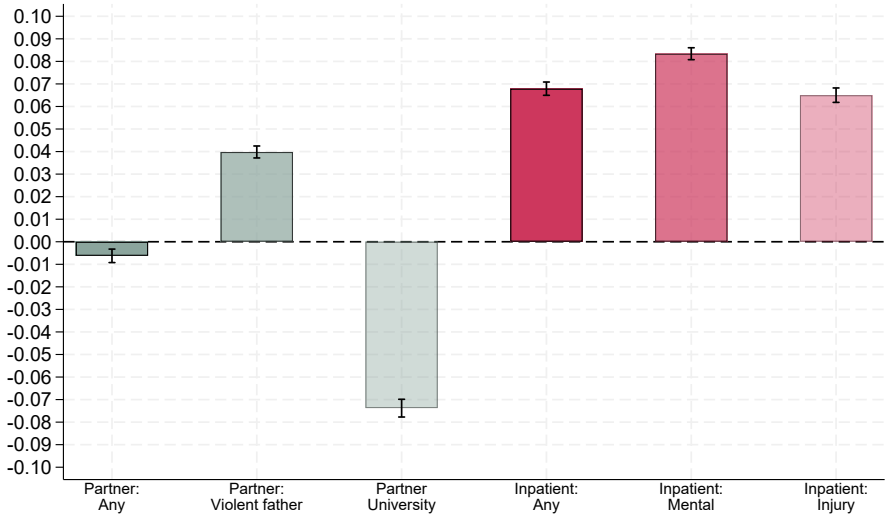
(b) Daughters with GBV fathers



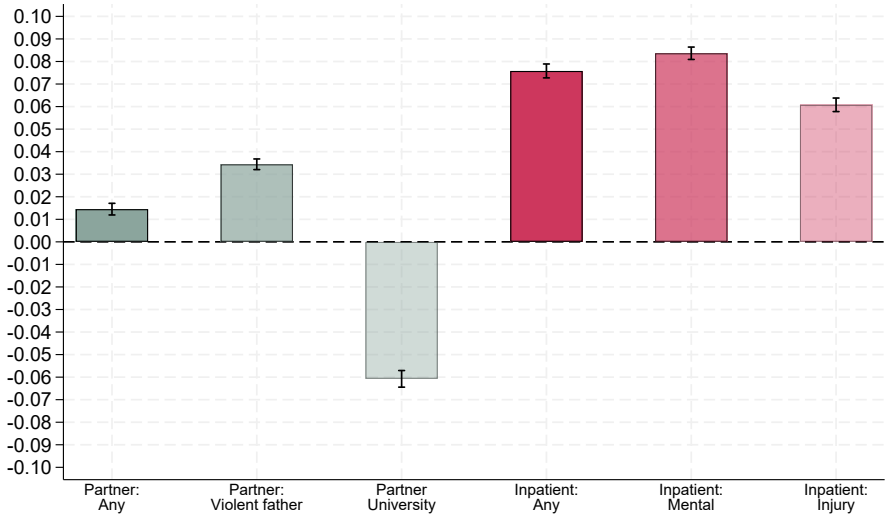
Notes: The figures track household income around the time of father's separation from the household for children born between 1970 and 1995. The outcome is annual disposable household income in 2020 Swedish kronas. Panel A shows the changes in household income for sons with fathers suspected of gender-based violence. Panel B shows changes in household income for daughters with fathers suspected of gender-based violence. The x-axis represents years relative to separation, with 0 marking the year of separation (indicated by the red vertical line). The omitted category is the year before separation. The regression includes calendar year fixed effects and child birth year fixed effects. The standard errors are clustered at the father level. Disposable income measure includes household income from labor, capital, and transfers minus taxes, plus non-taxable benefits, including child allowance, social assistance, social security benefits, and other transfers. The coefficient estimates and 95% confidence intervals are plotted.

Figure A6: Exposure Abusive Fathers and their Partnership and Health Outcomes: Linear Probability Estimates

(a) Sons



(b) Daughters



Notes: This figure plots the coefficient estimates from a linear probability model regressing six outcomes (defined in text) on an indicator for the father being suspected of GBV on for sons in Panel A and daughters in Panel B. We use the full sample, but includes demographic controls (birth-year fixed effects for father and son, indicators for whether the mother, father, or son is foreign born, and birth-order indicators from both parents), socioeconomic controls (parental educational attainment (high school and university) at birth, employment status at birth, and adjusted parental earnings at birth), and neighborhood controls (parish population, immigrant share, employment rate, average earnings, share of university-educated residents, number of offenders per 100K, and assault and homicide rates). All bars display 95% confidence intervals.

Table A1: Distribution of Crime Categories among Fathers and Sons

Crime category	% Suspected sons (1)	% Suspected fathers (2)	% Susp. sons |Any suspicion (3)	% Suspected fathers |Any suspicion (4)
Gross violation of woman's integrity	0.007	0.007	0.090	0.104
Assault of woman	0.046	0.044	0.637	0.659
(Attempted) murder of woman	0.001	0.001	0.012	0.011
Unlawful threat of woman	0.025	0.026	0.348	0.389
Molestation/harassment of woman	0.021	0.017	0.285	0.259
Molestation/harassment, unspecified gender	0.002	0.005	0.034	0.070
Violation of restraining order against woman	0.000	0.000	0.005	0.001
Violation of restraining order, unspecified gender	0.003	0.004	0.035	0.060
(Attempted) rape/molestation of woman	0.010	0.004	0.134	0.058
(Attempted) rape/molestation, unspecified gender	0.006	0.006	0.078	0.091
Stalking	0.000	0.000	0.002	0.001

Note: This table reports the distribution of gender-based violence across crime categories for fathers and sons in our sample. Sons were born between 1970 and 1995 in Sweden and matched with their fathers using registry information. Column 1 reports the proportion of suspected sons in each crime category, column 2 reports the proportion of suspected fathers in each crime category, column 3 reports the proportion of suspected sons conditional on any suspicion, and column 4 reports the proportion of suspected fathers conditional on any suspicion. All data come from Crime Suspicion Register of Sweden.

Table A2: Probability of Ever Cohabiting with a Partner

	Outcome mean	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Violent father	0.848	-0.014***	0.015***	0.012***	0.015***	0.018***
	(0.359)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.002)	(0.002)
% relative to outcome mean		[-2]	[2]	[1]	[2]	[2]
Demographic controls		–	Yes	Yes	Yes	–
Socioeconomic controls		–	–	Yes	Yes	–
Neighborhood controls		–	–	–	Yes	–
Matched sample		–	–	–	–	Yes
Obs.		1,374,446	1,374,446	1,374,446	1,374,446	306,404

Note: This table reports the probability of ever cohabiting with a partner in relation to having a father suspected of gender-based violence in Sweden. The outcome is an indicator for the daughter cohabiting with a partner. Column 1 reports the OLS coefficient from a linear probability model regressing an indicator for the daughter cohabiting with a partner on an indicator for the father being suspected of GBV. Column 2 reports OLS coefficient adding demographic controls, including birth-year fixed effects for father and daughter, indicators for whether the mother, father, or daughter is foreign born, and birth-order indicators from both parents. Column 3 reports OLS coefficient adding socioeconomic controls: parental educational attainment (high school and university) at birth, employment status at birth, and adjusted parental earnings at birth. Column 4 reports OLS coefficient adding neighborhood controls, including parish population, immigrant share, employment rate, average earnings, share of university-educated residents, number of offenders per 100K, and assault and homicide rates. Column 5 reports OLS estimate based on a matched control group based on parental immigrant status, employment at birth, earnings quintiles, birth order, parental age (in 5-year bins), and parental education (less than high school, high school, more than high school). Standard errors are clustered at the father level. ***, **, and * denote significance at the 1, 5, and 10 percent levels.

Table A3: Linear probability model estimates for sons

	Outcome mean	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Violent father	0.073	0.129***	0.115***	0.109***	0.106***	0.085***
	(0.260)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.002)
% relative to outcome mean		[177]	[158]	[149]	[146]	[116]
Demographic controls		–	Yes	Yes	Yes	–
Socioeconomic controls		–	–	Yes	Yes	–
Neighborhood controls		–	–	–	Yes	–
Matched sample		–	–	–	–	Yes
Obs.		1,446,816	1,446,816	1,446,816	1,446,816	317,672

Note: This table reports the intergenerational transmission of gender-based violence in Sweden. The outcome is an indicator for the son being suspected of GBV. Column 1 reports the OLS coefficient from a linear probability model regressing an indicator for the son being suspected of GBV on an indicator for the father being suspected of GBV, without controls. Column 2 reports OLS coefficient adding demographic controls, including birth-year fixed effects for father and son, indicators for whether the mother, father, or son is foreign born, and birth-order indicators from both parents. Column 3 reports OLS coefficient adding socioeconomic controls: parental educational attainment (high school and university) at birth, employment status at birth, and adjusted parental earnings at birth. Column 4 reports OLS coefficient adding neighborhood controls, including parish population, immigrant share, employment rate, average earnings, share of university-educated residents, number of offenders per 100K, and assault and homicide rates. Column 5 reports OLS estimate based on a matched control group based on parental immigrant status, employment at birth, earnings quintiles, birth order, parental age (in 5-year bins), and parental education (less than high school, high school, more than high school). Standard errors are clustered at the father level. ***, **, and * denote significance at the 1, 5, and 10 percent levels.

Table A4: Linear probability model estimates for all daughters

	Outcome mean	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Violent father	0.097	0.102***	0.091***	0.083***	0.082***	0.066***
	(0.296)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.002)
% relative to outcome mean		[105]	[94]	[86]	[84]	[68]
Demographic controls		–	Yes	Yes	Yes	–
Socioeconomic controls		–	–	Yes	Yes	–
Neighborhood controls		–	–	–	Yes	–
Matched sample		–	–	–	–	Yes
Obs.		1,374,446	1,374,446	1,374,446	1,374,446	306,404

Note: This table reports the intergenerational transmission of victimization based on gender-based violence in Sweden. The outcome is an indicator for the daughter cohabiting with a partner who was suspected of GBV. Column 1 reports the OLS coefficient from a linear probability model regressing an indicator for the daughter cohabiting with a partner who was suspected of GBV on an indicator for the father being suspected of GBV. Column 2 reports OLS coefficient adding demographic controls, including birth-year fixed effects for father and daughter, indicators for whether the mother, father, or daughter is foreign born, and birth-order indicators from both parents. Column 3 reports OLS coefficient adding socioeconomic controls: parental educational attainment (high school and university) at birth, employment status at birth, and adjusted parental earnings at birth. Column 4 reports OLS coefficient adding neighborhood controls, including parish population, immigrant share, employment rate, average earnings, share of university-educated residents, number of offenders per 100K, and assault and homicide rates. Column 5 reports OLS estimate based on a matched control group based on parental immigrant status, employment at birth, earnings quintiles, birth order, parental age (in 5-year bins), and parental education (less than high school, high school, more than high school). Standard errors are clustered at the father level. ***, **, and * denote significance at the 1, 5, and 10 percent levels.

Table A5: Linear probability model estimates for daughters conditional on having a partner

	Outcome mean	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Violent father	0.114	0.124***	0.106***	0.097***	0.095***	0.077***
	(0.318)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)	
% relative to outcome mean		[108]	[93]	[85]	[83]	[67]
Demographic controls		–	Yes	Yes	Yes	–
Socioeconomic controls		–	–	Yes	Yes	–
Neighborhood controls		–	–	–	Yes	–
Matched sample		–	–	–	–	Yes
Obs.		1,165,947	1,165,947	1,165,947	1,165,947	259,224

Note: This table reports the intergenerational transmission of victimization based on gender-based violence in Sweden. The outcome is an indicator for the daughter cohabiting with a partner who was suspected of GBV. Column 1 reports the OLS coefficient from a linear probability model regressing an indicator for the daughter cohabiting with a partner who was suspected of GBV on an indicator for the father being suspected of GBV. Column 2 reports OLS coefficient adding demographic controls, including birth-year fixed effects for father and daughter, indicators for whether the mother, father, or daughter is foreign born, and birth-order indicators from both parents. Column 3 reports OLS coefficient adding socioeconomic controls: parental educational attainment (high school and university) at birth, employment status at birth, and adjusted parental earnings at birth. Column 4 reports OLS coefficient adding neighborhood controls, including parish population, immigrant share, employment rate, average earnings, share of university-educated residents, number of offenders per 100K, and assault and homicide rates. Column 5 reports OLS estimate based on a matched control group based on parental immigrant status, employment at birth, earnings quintiles, birth order, parental age (in 5-year bins), and parental education (less than high school, high school, more than high school). Standard errors are clustered at the father level. ***, **, and * denote significance at the 1, 5, and 10 percent levels.

Table A6: Odds ratio estimates for sons

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Violent father	3.482***	3.006***	2.738***	2.672***	2.162***
	(0.010)	(0.010)	(0.010)	(0.010)	(0.018)
Demographic controls	–	Yes	Yes	Yes	–
Socioeconomic controls	–	–	Yes	Yes	–
Neighborhood controls	–	–	–	Yes	–
Matched sample	–	–	–	–	Yes
Obs.	1,446,816	1,446,816	1,446,816	1,446,816	317,672

Note: This table reports the intergenerational transmission of gender-based violence in Sweden. Column 1 reports the odds ratio obtained by regressing an indicator for the son being suspected of GBV on an indicator for the father being suspected of GBV, with no additional controls included. Column 2 reports the odds ratio adding demographic controls, including birth-year fixed effects for father and son, indicators for whether the mother, father, or son is foreign born, and birth-order indicators from both parents. Column 3 reports the odds ratio adding socioeconomic controls: parental educational attainment (high school and university) at birth, employment status at birth, and adjusted parental earnings at birth. Column 4 reports the odds ratio adding neighborhood controls, including parish population, immigrant share, employment rate, average earnings, share of university-educated residents, number of offenders per 100K, and assault and homicide rates. Column 5 reports the odds ratio based on a matched control group based on parental immigrant status, employment at birth, earnings quintiles, birth order, parental age (in 5-year bins), and parental education (less than high school, high school, more than high school). Standard errors are clustered at the father level. ***, **, and * denote significance at the 1, 5, and 10 percent levels.

Table A7: Odds ratio estimates for all daughters

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Violent father	2.397***	2.161***	1.969***	1.936***	1.684***
	(0.009)	(0.010)	(0.010)	(0.010)	(0.016)
Demographic controls	–	Yes	Yes	Yes	–
Socioeconomic controls	–	–	Yes	Yes	–
Neighborhood controls	–	–	–	Yes	–
Matched sample	–	–	–	–	Yes
Obs.	1,374,446	1,374,446	1,374,446	1,374,446	306,404

Note: This table reports the intergenerational transmission of victimization for gender-based violence in Sweden. Column 1 reports the odds ratio obtained by regressing an indicator for the daughter cohabiting with a partner being suspected of GBV on an indicator for the father being suspected of GBV, with no additional controls included. Column 2 reports the odds ratio adding demographic controls, including birth-year fixed effects for father and daughter, indicators for whether the mother, father, or daughter is foreign born, and birth-order indicators from both parents. Column 3 reports the odds ratio adding socioeconomic controls: parental educational attainment (high school and university) at birth, employment status at birth, and adjusted parental earnings at birth. Column 4 reports the odds ratio adding neighborhood controls, including parish population, immigrant share, employment rate, average earnings, share of university-educated residents, number of offenders per 100K, and assault and homicide rates. Column 5 reports the odds ratio based on a matched control group based on parental immigrant status, employment at birth, earnings quintiles, birth order, parental age (in 5-year bins), and parental education (less than high school, high school, more than high school). Standard errors are clustered at the father level. ***, **, and * denote significance at the 1, 5, and 10 percent levels.

Table A8: Odds ratio estimates for daughters who ever had a partner

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Violent father	2.514***	2.169***	1.974***	1.935***	1.694***
	(0.009)	(0.010)	(0.010)	(0.010)	(0.016)
Demographic controls	–	Yes	Yes	Yes	–
Socioeconomic controls	–	–	Yes	Yes	–
Neighborhood controls	–	–	–	Yes	–
Matched sample	–	–	–	–	Yes
Obs.	1,165,947	1,165,947	1,165,947	1,165,947	259,224

Note: This table reports the intergenerational transmission of victimization for gender-based violence in Sweden. The sample is restricted to women who are born between 1970 and 1995 and who ever cohabited with a partner. Column 1 reports the odds ratio obtained by regressing an indicator for the daughter cohabiting with a partner being suspected of GBV on an indicator for the father being suspected of GBV, with no additional controls included. Column 2 reports the odds ratio adding demographic controls, including birth-year fixed effects for father and daughter, indicators for whether the mother, father, or daughter is foreign born, and birth-order indicators from both parents. Column 3 reports the odds ratio adding socioeconomic controls: parental educational attainment (high school and university) at birth, employment status at birth, and adjusted parental earnings at birth. Column 4 reports the odds ratio adding neighborhood controls, including parish population, immigrant share, employment rate, average earnings, share of university-educated residents, number of offenders per 100K, and assault and homicide rates. Column 5 reports the odds ratio based on a matched control group based on parental immigrant status, employment at birth, earnings quintiles, birth order, parental age (in 5-year bins), and parental education (less than high school, high school, more than high school). Standard errors are clustered at the father level. ***, **, and * denote significance at the 1, 5, and 10 percent levels.

Table A9: Sons' Exposure to Abusive Fathers: LPM Estimates for Partnership and Health Outcomes

	(1) Partner: Any	(2) Partner: Violent father	(3) Partner: University	(4) Inpatient: Any	(5) Inpatient: Mental	(6) Inpatient: Injury
Panel A: Matched Sample						
Violent father	-0.00146	0.0286***	-0.0614***	0.0549***	0.0706***	0.0597***
	(0.00232)	(0.00203)	(0.00317)	(0.00231)	(0.00206)	(0.00257)
Constant	1.002***	-0.00763	0.981***	0.998***	-0.00136	0.816***
	(0.00501)	(0.00680)	(0.0175)	(0.00544)	(0.00469)	(0.156)
Observations	317,672	242,270	240,778	317,672	317,672	317,672
R-squared	0.061	0.015	0.014	0.016	0.011	0.015
Mean dep. var.	0.763	0.107	0.589	0.747	0.138	0.317
Panel B: Demographic, socioeconomic, neighborhood controls						
Violent father	-0.00625***	0.0398***	-0.0738***	0.0679***	0.0834***	0.0650***
	(0.00153)	(0.00135)	(0.00201)	(0.00150)	(0.00135)	(0.00163)
Constant	1.012***	-0.0580***	0.378***	0.905***	-0.0981***	0.944***
	(0.00808)	(0.00605)	(0.0107)	(0.00861)	(0.00551)	(0.00808)
Observations	1,440,626	1,113,563	1,106,671	1,440,626	1,440,626	1,440,626
R-squared	0.064	0.017	0.070	0.031	0.013	0.017
Mean dep. var.	0.773	0.0812	0.658	0.700	0.0956	0.281

Notes: This table reports the coefficient estimates from a linear probability model regressing an indicator for the father being suspected of GBV on six outcomes for sons observed in adulthood. The column 1 outcome is an indicator for having a partner at any point in time. The column 2 outcome is an indicator for the partner having a father suspected of GBV conditional on having a partner. The column 3 outcome is an indicator for having a partner who graduated from university conditional on having a partner. The column 4 outcome is an indicator for having any inpatient visits. The column 5 outcome is an indicator for having any mental health inpatient visits. The column 6 outcome is an indicator for having any injury-related inpatient visits. Panel A uses a matched control group based on parental immigrant status, employment at birth, earnings quintiles, birth order, parental age (in 5-year bins), and parental education (less than high school, high school, more than high school). Panel B uses the full sample, but includes demographic controls (birth-year fixed effects for father and son, indicators for whether the mother, father, or son is foreign born, and birth-order indicators from both parents), socioeconomic controls (parental educational attainment (high school and university) at birth, employment status at birth, and adjusted parental earnings at birth), and neighborhood controls (parish population, immigrant share, employment rate, average earnings, share of university-educated residents, number of offenders per 100K, and assault and homicide rates). Standard errors are clustered at the father level and reported in parentheses. ***, **, and * denote significance at the 1, 5, and 10 percent levels.

Table A10: Daughters' Exposure to Abusive Fathers: LPM Estimates for Partnership and Health Outcomes

	(1) Partner: Any	(2) Partner: Violent father	(3) Partner: University	(4) Inpatient: Any	(5) Inpatient: Mental	(6) Inpatient: Injury
Panel A: Matched Sample						
Violent father	0.0178***	0.0242***	-0.0556***	0.0606***	0.0684***	0.0548***
	(0.00196)	(0.00183)	(0.00295)	(0.00240)	(0.00210)	(0.00234)
Constant	0.523	-0.00310	-0.0320	0.496	0.486	0.00668
	(0.345)	(0.00960)	(0.0198)	(0.367)	(0.346)	(0.0148)
Observations	306,403	259,563	257,805	306,403	306,403	306,403
R-squared	0.033	0.020	0.013	0.020	0.011	0.010
Mean dep. var.	0.847	0.0925	0.419	0.724	0.153	0.236
Panel B: Demographic, socioeconomic, neighborhood controls						
Violent father	0.0145***	0.0344***	-0.0608***	0.0758***	0.0836***	0.0608***
	(0.00132)	(0.00121)	(0.00188)	(0.00157)	(0.00140)	(0.00153)
Constant	1.077***	-0.0683***	0.343***	0.942***	-0.136***	-0.0541***
	(0.00859)	(0.00569)	(0.0121)	(0.0102)	(0.00663)	(0.00854)
Observations	1,368,537	1,160,542	1,152,793	1,368,537	1,368,537	1,368,537
R-squared	0.052	0.018	0.090	0.032	0.012	0.010
Mean dep. var.	0.848	0.0676	0.489	0.676	0.112	0.207

Notes: This table reports the coefficient estimates from a linear probability model regressing an indicator for the father being suspected of GBV on six outcomes for daughters observed in adulthood. The column 1 outcome is an indicator for having a partner at any point in time. The column 2 outcome is an indicator for the partner having a father suspected of GBV conditional on having a partner. The column 3 outcome is an indicator for having a partner who graduated from university conditional on having a partner. The column 4 outcome is an indicator for having any inpatient visits. The column 5 outcome is an indicator for having any mental health inpatient visits. The column 6 outcome is an indicator for having any injury-related inpatient visits. Panel A uses a matched control group based on parental immigrant status, employment at birth, earnings quintiles, birth order, parental age (in 5-year bins), and parental education (less than high school, high school, more than high school). Panel B uses the full sample, but includes demographic controls (birth-year fixed effects for father and daughter, indicators for whether the mother, father, or daughter is foreign born, and birth-order indicators from both parents), socioeconomic controls (parental educational attainment (high school and university) at birth, employment status at birth, and adjusted parental earnings at birth), and neighborhood controls (parish population, immigrant share, employment rate, average earnings, share of university-educated residents, number of offenders per 100K, and assault and homicide rates). Standard errors are clustered at the father level and reported in parentheses. ***, **, and * denote significance at the 1, 5, and 10 percent levels.

Table A11: Father Incarceration and Sons' Partnership Outcomes

	Age 0-18	Age 0-11	Age 12-18
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Any partner	-0.293	-0.257	-0.567
	(0.318)	(0.291)	(0.817)
	[0.603]	[0.554]	[0.789]
	0.862	*0.887*	*0.853*
Number of partners	-0.638	-0.183	-3.520
	(0.554)	(0.432)	(5.371)
	[1.352]	[1.314]	[1.453]
	1.857	*1.297*	*5.153*
Partner with a violent father	0.209	0.257	-0.115
	(0.258)	(0.244)	(0.897)
	[0.203]	[0.215]	[0.171]
	-0.079	*-0.079*	*0.491*
Partner with university education	-0.056	-0.146	0.099
	(0.348)	(0.329)	(1.363)
	[0.416]	[0.396]	[0.468]
	0.384	*0.474*	*-0.024*
Partner with education up to compulsory school	0.109	0.097	-0.494
	(0.249)	(0.256)	(1.097)
	[0.119]	[0.123]	[0.108]
	-0.008	*0.026*	*0.633*
Court x Year x Strata FE	Yes	Yes	Yes
Balancing Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes
	5,293	3,835	1,458

Note: This table reports two-stage least squares estimates of the impact of father incarceration on sons' partnership outcomes. Columns 1-3 report two-stage least squares estimates that instrument for paternal incarceration using judge stringency. All regressions control for court-by-year-by-strata fixed effects and controls, including the childâs sex, birth order, migration status, and age at trial; the number of children in the family; the father's migration status, age, education, employment in the year before trial, and pretrial earnings; and the household's disposable income in the year before trial. Dependent variable means are in square brackets. The complier control means are italicized and listed in the rows below outcome means. Standard errors are two-way clustered at the parent and section levels. ***, **, and * denote significance at the 1, 5, and 10 percent levels.

Table A12: Father Incarceration and Daughters' Partnership Outcomes

	Age 0-18	Age 0-11	Age 12-18
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Any partner	-0.367	-0.258	-1.414
	(0.302)	(0.326)	(1.856)
	[0.732]	[0.700]	[0.854]
	0.878	*0.851*	*1.354*
Number of partners	-0.310	0.067	-2.150
	(0.561)	(0.633)	(5.130)
	[1.412]	[1.394]	[1.468]
	1.577	*1.369*	*2.563*
Partner with a violent father	-0.224	-0.191	-0.711
	(0.363)	(0.410)	(1.814)
	[0.178]	[0.195]	[0.126]
	0.578	*0.591*	*0.822*
Partner with university education	0.226	0.157	1.925
	(0.430)	(0.477)	(4.417)
	[0.323]	[0.311]	[0.362]
	0.611	*0.550*	*0.492*
Partner with education up to compulsory school	-0.115	0.226	-2.571
	(0.340)	(0.429)	(5.466)
	[0.154]	[0.155]	[0.152]
	0.091	*-0.039*	*0.916*
Court x Year x Strata FE	Yes	Yes	Yes
Balancing Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes
	5,791	4,390	1,401

Note: This table reports two-stage least squares estimates of the impact of father incarceration on daughters' partnership outcomes. Columns 1-3 report two-stage least squares estimates that instrument for paternal incarceration using judge stringency. All regressions control for court-by-year-by-strata fixed effects and controls, including the childâs sex, birth order, migration status, and age at trial; the number of children in the family; the father's migration status, age, education, employment in the year before trial, and pretrial earnings; and the household's disposable income in the year before trial. Dependent variable means are in square brackets. The complier control means are italicized and listed in the rows below outcome means. Standard errors are two-way clustered at the parent and section levels. ***, **, and * denote significance at the 1, 5, and 10 percent levels.

Table A13: Descriptive Statistics for Children Born 1978–1995

	Descriptive sample	Judge sample
Panel A: Demographics		
Mother age at birth	26.636	26.893
Mother aged $\leq$20 at birth	0.119	0.111
Mother aged 21–30 at birth	0.638	0.640
Mother aged 31–40 at birth	0.220	0.238
Mother aged 41+ at birth	0.010	0.011
Father age at birth	29.792	30.492
Father aged $\leq$20 at birth	0.037	0.034
Father aged 21–30 at birth	0.555	0.517
Father aged 31–40 at birth	0.348	0.373
Father aged 41+ at birth	0.060	0.076
Mother foreign born	0.323	0.339
Father foreign born	0.372	0.396
Child foreign born	0.141	0.004
Birth order (father side)	1.955	2.097
First child (mother side)	0.432	0.388
Second child (mother side)	0.315	0.323
Third child (mother side)	0.148	0.174
Fourth child or higher (mother side)	0.091	0.115
Birth order (mother side)	2.006	2.174
First child (father side)	0.434	0.380
Second child (father side)	0.308	0.308
Third child (father side)	0.151	0.174
Fourth child or higher (father side)	0.107	0.136
Panel B: Baseline socioeconomic status		
More than HS education (mother)	0.251	0.212
HS education (mother)	0.545	0.506
Less than HS education (mother)	0.199	0.271
More than HS education (father)	0.186	0.150
HS education (father)	0.529	0.529
Less than HS education (father)	0.278	0.317
Employment (mother, year of birth)	0.725	0.627
Employment (mother, one year before birth)	0.691	0.600
Employment (father, year of birth)	0.798	0.702
Employment (father, one year before birth)	0.782	0.690
Earnings (mother, year of birth)	133576.066	117201.508
Earnings (mother, one year before birth)	132079.625	115153.165
Earnings (father, year of birth)	189522.125	163852.311
Earnings (father, one year before birth)	184190.034	157965.463
Panel C: Baseline neighborhood characteristics		
Population	10,584.627	11,427.719
Share of immigrants	0.142	0.170
Employment rate	0.811	0.807
Mean earnings	199287.810	199854.134
More than HS	0.264	0.279
Less than HS	0.282	0.267
Offenses per 100,000 inhabitants	5,361.696	5,844.174
Offenders per 100,000 inhabitants	945.591	1,013.462
Assault rate per 100,000 inhabitants	87.324	97.775
Homicide rate per 100,000 inhabitants	1.155	1.260
Observations	81,424	7,809

Note: This table reports means of baseline characteristics for children born between 1978 and 1995. The samples correspond to those used in the descriptive section and the judge IV analysis.